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THE CONCEPT OF WORLD HEGEMONY AND THE UNDERSTANDING OF
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND REGULATION

A critical reading of the current
conceptualizations of world hegemony

By

Ezz-Edine Choukri

A thesis submitted to
the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

Masters of Art in Political Science

Supervisor : Professor Yvon Thériault

University of Ottawa
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Ezz-Edine Choukri, Ottawa, Ontario, 1995



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◀ The strong do what they can,
and the weak suffer as they
must ▶

Thucydides



UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA
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ABSTRACT

This thesis questions the utility of the concept of "world hegemony" in understanding world politics. In doing so, it reviews the ways in which both Realist and Marxist traditions used that concept to study three examples of international regulation: the GATT, the global environmental negotiations, and the Coordinated Aid to Russia. This review shows the limited explanatory power of both Realist and Marxist conceptions of hegemony. Based on the analysis of modernity presented by Karl Polanyi and Anthony Giddens, the thesis presents a new conception of world hegemony that refers to the centuries-long build-up of consensus and consent around a modern and global historic bloc. The latter includes market-economy, interstate system, individualism and human emancipation. The analysis of the interactions between actors and this multidimensional global historic bloc provides better understanding of the three examples of international regulation used in the thesis.

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the importance of the concept of world hegemony in studying world politics, its conceptualization is generally poor. Usually, its underpinning connotation is ambiguous and contains a considerable amount of confusion, which raises questions about the value of the concept itself. This "contestation" is supported by the limited explanatory power the concept has demonstrated in the study of world politics. Both in matters of international cooperation and international regulation, the concept of "world hegemony" provides less of explanations than of questions.

The debate over "American hegemony" provides a good illustration of the crisis of the concept of world hegemony. Both camps in this debate are using multiple conceptions of hegemony. This multiplicity includes the connotation of the concept itself, the level of analysis, and the historical instance to which the concept refers. Certain scholars identify world hegemony with the domination of the world order by one state, some confound it with altruism and internationalism, and others use it as being synonymous to imperialism. Some scholars use it to describe an actor in the world order while others use it to describe this order as such, etc.

In addition to this confusion, the capacity of the "American hegemony" concept to account for world politics is dubious. By world politics I refer to both international cooperation and international regulation. The distinction between the two is not clear-cut. The actual

forms and institutions of international regulation (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, United Nations' Security Council, etc.) are, in principle, based on international cooperation. Yet, this formal approach is misleading as these institutions (as well as other forms of regulation) do exercise *coercion* on subordinate states, either by the actual use of force, or by the threat of using it. In this sense, the distinction between cooperation and regulation lies in the degree of the actor's autonomy. The more it is autonomous, the more its cooperative behaviour is considered as a part of international cooperation. The more its cooperative behaviour is obtained by coercion (latent or explicit), the more this behaviour is considered part of international regulation. Certainly, a categorization can be done neither on spatial, nor on sectorial basis as states are not ordered in a symmetrical rigid manner. Nevertheless, Western states (and Japan) are less subject to regulation than non-Western (or peripheral, or subordinate) states. However, when it comes to the analysis of concrete cases, the autonomy/coercion criterion must be anchored in temporal and spatial specifications.

In both cases of cooperation and regulation, the "world hegemony" concept (or that of "American hegemony") fails to answer three basic questions. The first is: how is international cooperation eroding, as the GATT crisis (among others) shows, while international regulation is consolidated, as the actions of IMF and World Bank demonstrate? The second question is how does international cooperation, with all its difficulties, persist "after hegemony", as demonstrated by the case of the coordinated aid programmes to Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) and ex-

USSR? And finally, why is international cooperation relatively smooth in certain sectors while problematic (and almost impossible) in others, as shown by the differences among the sectors of environmental protection?

Thus, the problematic of this thesis is *to examine the pertinence of the "world hegemony" concept both on the theoretical and analytical levels. This implies a two-fold question: can the said concept be forged in a way that avoids the present confusion and contestation? then can this concept provide better understanding of world politics, or is it essentially of limited use?*

In its attempt to answer this question, this thesis presents a three-fold hypothesis. First, the "American hegemony" concept is both confused theoretically and misleading analytically. It is built on confused metaphors and offers less of an explanation than of mystification to issues of international cooperation and international regulation.

Secondly, the limits of the concept's explanatory power stem from the characteristics of its used connotation, especially those concerning the level of analysis (inter-state, inter-national and global scales) and the definition of hegemony (imposed power-relation versus constructed social relations).

Thirdly, that a more useful conceptualization of "world hegemony" should present a distinctive connotation of hegemony, and use a global level of analysis. This would lead to consider "world hegemony" as a set of social relations (or structures) in construction. In other words, it should be regarded as a Gramscian "passive revolution" that is taking

place on a global scale. Such a connotation would be more capable of providing explanations for the contours of international cooperation and regulation.

To verify this three-fold hypothesis, I will begin by examining the current conceptualizations of "world hegemony". The first chapter will survey the conceptions presented by the two principal traditions of international relations: realism and marxism. The goal of this survey is to identify the basic characteristics of their ways of perceiving the said concept. On the realist side, the works of Robert Gilpin and Robert Keohane will be paid extensive attention. Other conceptualizations (such as those of Charles Kindleberger, Stephen Krasner, Susan Strange, and Paul Kennedy) will be briefly analyzed. On the other side, the works of Robert Cox will be thoroughly examined, while other contributions (like that of Giovanni Arrighi, Immanuel Wallerstein...) will be briefly examined. This survey will enable us to address the "essential contestability" of the concept and evaluate its pertinence.

The second chapter explores the explanatory limits of the "world hegemony" concept. The analysis of Robert Gilpin, Robert Keohane and Robert Cox will be taken as examples of the current literature that use the concept of "American hegemony". Therefore, the chapter will start by presenting the debate over "American hegemony" in relating it to the issues of cooperation and regulation. Then, it will identify the limits of the explanatory power of the analysis presented by Gilpin, Keohane and Cox. In so doing, the chapter will refer to three examples of

international cooperation and regulation: the GATT negotiations, the coordinated aid to CEEC and ex-USSR, and the cooperation for the protection of the environment. The final section of this chapter will attempt to identify the theoretical origins of the limits to the concept's explanatory power. This examination, together with the conclusions of the first chapter, will make possible a verification of the first and second parts of this thesis' hypothesis.

In the light of this examination, the third chapter will present an alternative conception of "world hegemony" that avoids the identified confusion and provide better explanation for the issues of international cooperation and regulation. The base of this attempt is the Gramscian hegemony-related concepts, such as *Historic Bloc*, *Passive Revolution*, and *Caesarism*. Although Gramsci's writings were basically directed to analyze an "internal" situation, they prove to be of a considerable relevance to global affairs. Robert Cox has already applied these concepts to international relations theory. This application is certainly useful. Yet, it seems that there is room for more elaboration in this direction. This alternative conception will be subjected to the same criteria of examination applied to the actual conceptualizations of "world hegemony". In this sense, this chapter will verify the third part of the thesis' hypothesis.

The problematic of this research claims two theoretical advantages. The first is that it raises questions about one of the basic concepts used to understand world politics. It seeks to clarify the different usages of that concept in order to eliminate theoretical confusion and its

consequent false debates. Secondly, by proposing a certain conceptualization of hegemony, it examines the viability and the utility of introducing sociological research into the field of international political economy. In so doing, it also overcomes the distinction between "internal" politics and "international relations". Such an intersection would prove to be quite helpful to improve our understanding of global issues.

CHAPTER I HEGEMONY : AN "ESSENTIALLY CONTESTED" CONCEPT

The concept of "world hegemony", in both its realist and marxist notions, is highly contested. Its appraisive character, its multiple connotations and its open-ended denotations are usually presented as undermining its conceptual exactitude and its practical utility¹. W.E. Connolly summarizes these reserves as follows:

When the concept involved is *appraisive* in that the state of affairs it describes is a valued achievement, when the practice described is *internally complex* in that its characterization involves reference to several dimensions, and when the agreed and contested rules of application are *relatively open* [...] then the concept in question is an "essentially contested concept".

The *appraisive* character of the concept takes several forms, among which, its ideological underpinnings. Such normativity obstructs the coherence and clarity of the conceptualization process itself, as well as biasing the analysis in general.

Connolly's *internal complexity* refers to what Rapkin calls "a situation of multiple connotations³", in which there is no agreement on the substantive meanings given to the concept, and to the terms used in it. Therefore, the problem of the concept of "world hegemony" is that it is used by different scholars to refer to different categories of

¹ David P. Rapkin, "The Contested Concept of Hegemonic Leadership", in: David P. Rapkin, ed., World Leadership and Hegemony, Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990, pp. 1-19.

² W. E. Connolly, The Terms of Political Discourse, Lexington, 1974, p. 10.

³ David Rapkin, op.cit., p. 2.

phenomena. This is aggravated by the multiplicity of connotations attributed to its associated terms, such as hegemonic power, regimes, leadership, international order, international cooperation, etc.

The *openness of application rules* refers to the multiplicity of the concept's denotations. "Denotation involves determining those real-world objects to which the concept applies⁴". The absence of agreement on the specific historical cases that constitute "world hegemony(ies)" makes the concept even more contested.

In order to discuss the full implications of this contestation, the major conceptualizations of world hegemony should be clarified first. Therefore, this chapter will examine the realist and marxian conception of world hegemony in order to appreciate and finally reject the "essential contestation" put forward by Connolly.

A. REALIST AND MARXIAN NOTIONS OF "WORLD HEGEMONY"

This section identifies the basic features of both realist and marxian conceptions of "world hegemony". It argues that the common characteristics of both realist and marxian conceptualizations of "world hegemony" make such a distinction less useful. Instead, I will propose a distinction based on two criteria: the level of analysis (i.e. inter-state, inter-national, or world-scale) and the position vis-à-vis the actor/structure.

⁴ David Rapkin, "The Contested Concept of Hegemonic Leadership", p. 2.

1. Realist tradition: hegemony and state capabilities

The concept of "world hegemony" has played an important role in the realist explanations of the changes that occurred in the international scene since the beginning of the twentieth century. In certain cases, it represents a central element in their international relations' theory.

Despite some differences and refinements, Charles Kindleberger's conceptualization, presented in 1973, includes all the elements of the realist notions of "world hegemony"⁵. Kindleberger attributes the Great Depression of the 1930s to the absence of inter-state political leadership. In this sense, the existence of a leader-state is essential to the stability of the international system: *"...the main lesson of the inter-war years, however, (is) that for the world economy to be stabilized, there has to be a stabilizer, one stabilizer"*⁶. This conception contains four key elements of the realist notion of "world hegemony". First, it is actor-centred, i.e. "world hegemony" is perceived as a quality of an actor. Second, it is a power relation, i.e. the hegemon is an actor who exercises power over others. Third, it is an inter-state relation, i.e. the parties of the "hegemonic relationship" (the actors) are exclusively states. Finally, hegemony is conducive to stability and to economic prosperity as the hegemon guarantees the functioning of the system as a whole, sometimes at his own expense in the short term. All

⁵ Charles P. Kindleberger, The World in Depression 1929-1939, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1973.

⁶ ibid., p. 305.

realists' conceptions contain these four dimensions, even if they weight them differently.

Stephen Krasner's conception of "world hegemony" reflects these basic characteristics perfectly. In his analysis, Krasner acknowledges that a *hegemon-state* uses its *power* to build and maintain frameworks of accepted rules, institutions and norms that *provide order and stability* to the world economy. When their position is weakened, hegemon-states tend to exploit the system to defend their national interest⁷. Here, the four dimensions of Kindleberger's conception are present: "world hegemony" is a quality of an actor, it concerns a power relation, it is located in inter-state level, and it provides the system with a management function.

The distinctiveness of Susan Strange's conception of "world hegemony" lies in her sophisticated approach to power. She distinguishes four interrelated structures: the control over other's security, over the production system, over the structures of finance and credit, and over knowledge and information⁸. Applying this definition to the international political economy, she concludes that the hegemon is the state which is dominant in these four structures. Although she derives her conception basically from marxian sources (Giovanni Arrighi and Stephen Gill)⁹, and

⁷ Stephen Krasner, ed., International Regimes, New York, Cornell University Press, 1983.

⁸ Susan Strange, "The persistent myth of lost hegemony", International Organization, vol. 41, n° 4, Autumn 1987, p. 565.

⁹ ibid., p. 554.

despite her criticism of Kindleberger's "hegemonic stability theory", she has reintroduced his four-fold concept. In her conceptualization, "world hegemony" is still a quality of an actor, is a power relation (whether uni-dimensional or four-fold), is strictly an inter-state relation, and provides stability and order.

Although the term "world hegemony" is not frequently used in the much publicized book; *Rise and Fall of Great Powers* of the British historian Paul Kennedy, the entire book is concerned with the hegemonic phenomenon. Kennedy's primary concern is *state power*. He emphasizes the relative, not the absolute, power of states. In his analysis of "British hegemony", he underlines its *share* of world production and trade, its naval ~~mastery~~ and its technological *advancement*¹⁰. In the case of the United States, he acknowledges explicitly the importance of the distinction absolute/relative in the assessment of the American "share of world power"¹¹. Hegemony is hence equated with relative state supremacy and domination over other states. In this sense, Kennedy's conception of "world hegemony" reflects three of the four dimensions of Kindleberger's conception: it is actor-centred, power-based, and placed in the inter-state relations.

It is with Robert Gilpin and Robert Keohane that the concept of "world hegemony" reaches its peak. Both scholars have developed, albeit

¹⁰ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, New York, Random House, 1987, pp. 151-158.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 514.

differently, their theory of international political economy in relation to this concept. Both have resorted to this very concept to apprehend, explain and predict the fate of international cooperation and regulation.

According to Robert Gilpin, "*Hegemony, from the Greek, refers to the leadership of one state (the hegemon) over other states in the system*¹²." In case of eroding hegemony, "the pressing issues of world order (rules governing trade, the future of the international monetary system, a new regime for the oceans, etc) remain unresolved¹³." This definition revolves around the four basic dimensions of Kindleberger's conception.

First, in Gilpin's view, "world hegemony" describes an actor. It refers to a specific configuration of characteristics attributed to this actor, and which permit her/him to qualify for this status. In this sense, "world hegemony" can be British, American, or German, Japanese, etc.

Secondly, Gilpin's appreciation of *the power dimension* is perfectly harmonious with the realist tradition. In his book, which contains his theory of international relations, he equates hegemony with domination:

The first structure (of international system) is imperial or hegemonic: A single powerful state controls or dominates the lesser states in the system¹⁴.

¹² Robert Gilpin, War and Change in World Politics, New York, Columbia University Press, 1981, p. 116.

¹³ ibid., p. 234.

¹⁴ ibid., p. 29.

This perception is clear throughout his book¹⁵. Hegemony emerges as the "...inevitable consequence of the victory of at least one of the states¹⁶" in a hegemonic war. This *embedded realism* would lead him to define hegemony as "*political domination*"¹⁷.

Thirdly, Gilpin presents hegemony as *an inter-state relation*. His definition of "hegemonic wars" as affecting in a fundamental way "...all the political units inside one system of relations between sovereign states¹⁸", is very indicative of this perception. All through his writings, even in his analysis of transnational economic relations, he conceptualizes hegemony as a relation between states¹⁹.

Finally, "world hegemony" is a *world manager*. Although Gilpin argues that "there is no necessary connection between political hegemony and economic liberalism²⁰", he admits that a hegemon provides the *public goods* of *liberal management* of the international system. Historically,

¹⁵ For example, on page 169 only, he refers equally to hegemony and imperialism five times: "empires as well as hegemonic powers", "imperial or hegemonic positions", "empire and hegemony", "empires and hegemonic powers" and finally: "imperial or hegemonic power".

¹⁶ Raymond Aron quoted by Gilpin, *ibid.*, pp. 197-208.

¹⁷ Robert Gilpin, "The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism", in Robert Keohane, ed., Neorealism and its Critics, New York, Columbia University Press, 1986, p. 311.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 197.

¹⁹ Robert Gilpin, "The Politics of Transnational Economic Relations", in: Robert Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Transnational Relations and World Politics, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1973 (1970), pp. 48-69.

²⁰ Robert Gilpin, "The Richness ...", p. 311.

"...hegemony, or political domination, has been associated with the command economies of empires.²¹" It is only with the advent of the *Pax Britannica* that *world management* becomes liberal. Still, the inherent function of a "hegemonic or imperial power" is to "set the rules" of the international system²². This dimension does not contradict Gilpin's assertion that: "[n]or does it follow that the decline of hegemony will lead inevitably to the collapse of a liberal world economy."²³ What is at stake here is the liberal quality of the system-management, not the role of the hegemon as a manager. According to Gilpin, there is a role (or a function) of *economic leadership* that *should be assumed* by the hegemon. The absence of this hegemonic situation is an acute *problem* that has been *resolved*, prior to the nuclear age, by hegemonic wars. The improbability of this *solution* together with the absence of any other mechanism for change creates a "hegemony problem" in Gilpin's view²⁴.

In fact, Gilpin presents an *ideal type* of the realist conceptualization of "world hegemony": in his perception of hegemony as actor-centred, as a net domination, in his focus on inter-state relations and in the manager role he attributes to the "world hegemony". Nevertheless, the last element is the key to Gilpin's conception of "world hegemony" and the source of its importance in the study of world politics.

²¹ Robert Gilpin, "The Richness..", p. 311.

²² Robert Gilpin, War and Change..., p. 169 and p. 234.

²³ Robert Gilpin, "The Richness...". op.cit., p. 311.

²⁴ Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy of International Relations, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1987, p. 351.

In fact, his entire explanation of these issues rests upon his appreciation of the role of hegemony in administering the inter-state system.

Gilpin's analysis of the relation between "world hegemony" and the liberal international order summarizes these four dimensions. In this analysis, he introduces the concept of "political framework" upon which this order rests. A framework that is three-fold:

The first is a dominant *liberal* hegemonic power [...]. The second is a set of common economic, political, and security interests that help bind liberal states together. And the third is a shared ideological commitment to liberal values²⁵.

It is this "political framework" that permitted the functioning, the stability, the prosperity and the very existence of the international liberal order²⁶. "World hegemony", which describes an international actor (a state), is only one element in the structures of the system. Hence, hegemony is not, according to Gilpin, the sole guarantor of the functioning of an international order, it is only one element interwoven with both shared-ideology and affinity of states' interests. This attention which Gilpin gives to the role of ideology sounds strange to his *realist* notions of "world hegemony", and it is also found, albeit differently, in Keohane's analysis.

"World hegemony" remains a central concept to Robert Keohane's analysis even if he bases his entire theory on the negation of its actual

²⁵ Robert Gilpin, "The Richness...", p. 312.

²⁶ For a more detailed analysis of the relation between the two, see: Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy... pp. 341-363.

importance. Keohane starts by criticising the "hegemonic stability theory" defended by Kindleberger and mostly by Gilpin²⁷. Through this critique, and in relation to the question of the role of "world hegemony", Keohane establishes his own theory of "International Regimes". In his definition of "world hegemony", as well as in his overall analysis of the international political economy, a number of relevant characteristics can be traced.

Keohane defines hegemony as a situation in which *"...one state is powerful enough to maintain the essential rules governing interstate relations, and willing to do so"*²⁸. Once more, this definition retains the basic dimensions of Kindleberger's conception.

First of all, as the case with other realists, "world hegemony", in Keohane's analysis, describes an actor. This dimension can be clarified by discussing the other dimensions of his conceptualization. Secondly, he presents "world hegemony" as a power relation, in spite of his attention to its normative aspect and to its incorporative character. In the final analysis, Keohane considers hegemony as a consequence of preponderance in power resources and the will to use them to enforce a certain kind of world order. In fact, power remains central to his definition, or as he himself puts it, his definition *"...retains an emphasis on power but looks more seriously than the crude power theory at the international*

²⁷ Robert Keohane, "The Theory of Hegemonic Stability and Changes in International Economic Regimes, 1967-1977", in: Ole R. Holsti et al., ed., Changes in the International System, Colorado, Westview Press, 1980, pp. 131-162.

²⁸ Robert Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1977, p. 44.

characteristics of the strong state²⁹." By power, Keohane does not refer to what James G. March has called "the basic force model"³⁰ which revolves around the concept of control, and is generally measured empirically (population, production, weaponry, etc).

These models can be qualified by adding auxiliary hypotheses that refer to the role of intangible factors such as will, intensity of motivation, or-in the "refined" version of the theory of hegemonic stability-leadership³¹.

According to Keohane, these factors can only be measured after the event implying the use of power takes place, and so the model does not help in prediction. In addition, this "crude basic force model" , in Keohane's view, makes an automatic link between power and leadership: a hegemon might "...decide not to commit the necessary effort to the tasks of leadership³²." Instead of this "crude" notion of power, Keohane underlines, albeit briefly, the importance of the deference of other states. In his discussion of Marxian notions of hegemony, he borrows two basic ideas concerning hegemony. Keohane accepts Wallerstein's idea that: "Hegemons require deference to enable them to construct a structure of world capitalist order. It is too expensive, and perhaps self-defeating, to achieve this by force"³³. In addition, Keohane emphasizes the Gramscian

²⁹ Robert Keohane, After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Politics, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, p. 35.

³⁰ ibid., p. 20.

³¹ ibid.

³² ibid., pp. 34-35.

³³ ibid., p. 45.

idea that deference of other states is not necessarily a "false consciousness" or a betrayal of "selfish elites". At the inter-state level, deference is based on the fact that even smaller and weaker countries can benefit from a hegemonic order, sometimes more than the hegemon itself. Thus, if we extend this argument, hegemony is not based purely on domination as is the case with most of realist definitions, it includes *an incorporative element*. But Keohane does not pronounce this word, and through the rest of the book, this insight faints away. Power and capabilities preponderance, resurrect as synonyms to hegemony. Hence, when Keohane discusses the *tangible characteristics* of a hegemon, he refers namely, as a perfect realist, to military power and to wealth. In this perspective, he claims that:

A hegemonic state must possess enough military power to be able to protect the international political economy that it dominates from incursions by hostile adversaries³⁴.

To be considered hegemonic in the world political economy, therefore, a country must have access to crucial raw materials, control major sources of capital, maintain a large market for imports, and hold comparative advantage in goods with high value added. [...] It must also be stronger, on these dimensions taken as a whole, than any other country³⁵.

Keohane basically retains this definition (which is derived from the "hegemonic stability theory") in combining these two aspects together:

The military conditions for economic hegemony are met if the economically preponderant country has sufficient military capabilities to prevent incursions by others that would deny it access to major areas of its economic activity³⁶.

³⁴ Robert Keohane, After Hegemony, op.cit., p. 39.

³⁵ ibid., pp. 33-34.

³⁶ ibid., p. 40.

Therefore, power resources and capabilities, as well as the will to use them, remain central to Keohane's conception of "world hegemony".

Thirdly, Keohane places hegemony in the level of inter-state relations. In spite of the acute attention he gives to non-state actors in *Power and Interdependence*, Keohane excludes all these previously-presumed actors in his subsequent writings in favour of the state. In matters of *international cooperation and discord*, it is the state that counts. In his analysis, hegemony is British, American or Roman: "Both Britain in the nineteenth century and the United States in the twentieth met the material prerequisites for hegemony better than *any other state* since the Industrial Revolution³⁷." Keohane uses equally the terms "world hegemony", "hegemonic power" and "hegemonic state". In his discussion of the role of ideology in hegemony in its Marxian notions, Keohane sticks clearly to states as the sole partners in a hegemonic relation³⁸.

The administrative and stabilizing qualities of "world hegemony" are also present in Keohane's analysis. Regardless of the fact that his whole theory of international cooperation is based on the possibility of post-hegemonic cooperation, Keohane's definition of hegemony is fundamentally centred on the idea of "...maintaining the essential rules governing interstate relations³⁹". Although the international system, in Keohane's theory, can be "administered" without "hegemony", the latter is inherently a *world manager*. This function is hegemony's *raison d'être*. His

³⁷ Robert Keohane, After Hegemony, pp. 35-36.

³⁸ ibid., pp. 41-46.

³⁹ ibid., p. 34-35.

proposition that International Regimes can survive after hegemony is not in contradiction with that conviction, on the contrary. In all cases, regardless of its role in the 1980s and 1990s, "world hegemony" as a concept describes an actor, concerns inter-state power relations, and is supposed to provide management functions to the inter-state system.

In sum, the realist conception of "world hegemony", from Kindleberger to Keohane including Krasner, Strange, Kennedy, and Gilpin, revolves around four basic elements. "World hegemony" describes an actor. It is a relation based on a preponderance in power resources and capabilities of this actor. It takes place at the inter-state level. And it provides stability and order to the system as a whole. The next section will examine the extent to which this vision differs from Marxian notions of world hegemony.

2. Marxian notions of hegemony

Marxian notions of hegemony differ radically from one scholar to the other. Generally, three major trends can be identified in the Marxian literature on "world hegemony". The first is nearer to the classical Leninist notion of hegemony as domination. This version is adopted by, among others, Immanuel Wallerstein and Giovanni Arrighi. The second trend is based on Gramsci's notion of hegemony, which gives more attention to both ideology and incorporation while adopting a state-centered approach. This trend is manifested in the analysis of "American Hegemony" presented by Stephen Gill. The third version is also Gramscian but it identifies

"world hegemony" with the structures of the world order itself, not with any of its actors. This is the Gramscian-based conceptualization proposed by Robert Cox. Both the first and the second trends share the basic characteristics of the realist conception of "world hegemony". *Therefore any genuine comparison of "world hegemony" conceptions should be established not between Marxists and Realists but between two radically different connotations of the concept: one is actor-centred, power-based, that places "hegemony" into inter-state relations, and the other is structural, based on shared-norms, and places "hegemony" into international relations.*

Immanuel Wallerstein is nearer to the Leninist conception of hegemony, which he defines as:

... a situation wherein the products of a core state are produced so efficiently that they are by and large competitive even in other core states, and therefore the given core state will be the primary beneficiary of a maximally free world market. Obviously, to take advantage of this productive superiority, such a state must be strong enough to prevent or minimize the erection of internal and external political barriers to the free flow of the factors of production⁴⁰.

This long definition contains the main characteristics of the Realist conception of "world hegemony". Obviously, it *describes a certain kind of actors*. "Hegemony is a rare condition; to date only Holland, Great Britain, and the United States have been hegemonic powers in the capitalist world-economy..."⁴¹. In addition, he uses a *combination of*

⁴⁰ Immanuel Wallerstein, The Modern World-System II: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600-1750, New York, Academic Press, 1980, p. 38.

⁴¹ ibid.

power and wealth to define the hegemon-state, which is not without realist resonance. He also emphasizes the domination, coercion, exploitation and inequality characteristics of the "hegemonic power"⁴². Thirdly, in his definition, Wallerstein clearly places "world hegemony" at the *level of inter-state relations*. Finally, the underpinning assumption of Wallerstein's definition is that the *hegemon-state sets the rules of the world-economy*. Actually, this conception is identical with that of Gilpin or Keohane. In fact Wallerstein goes beyond Keohane's argument and as far as that of Gilpin in presuming that a "world hegemony" is, by definition, liberal.

These same dimensions are equally found, albeit differently, in the analysis made by Giovanni Arrighi of the "crisis of hegemony" in the 1980s⁴³. In this view, "American hegemony" is an *imperial world order*, where the United States uses its economic and military supremacy to dominate the inter-state system and to restructure the world economy. In this order, the dollar becomes a universal currency and the CIA an imperial secret-police⁴⁴. Here again, "world hegemony" *describes an actor; namely the United States*. It refers to a *power* relationship, which is more than ever identified with domination. Also, *the inter-state character* of the analysis is evident. Finally, "world hegemony" is a *manager* of the

⁴² David Rapkin, "The Contested Concept of Hegemonic Leadership", p. 3.

⁴³ Giovanni Arrighi, "Une crise d'hégémonie", in: Samir Amin et al., La crise, quelle crise?, Paris, François Maspero, 1982, pp. 57-108.

⁴⁴ ibid., pp. 59-60.

world order. Even if this management is not *benign* as was the case with the realists, the principle is the same: "world hegemony" refers to an actor, a preponderant state that administers the inter-state system.

Stephen Gill embraces a Gramscian-based conception of hegemony but places it into inter-state relations. His main contribution to the conceptualization of "world hegemony" concerns the definition of power. He criticizes "the behavioral forms of power which may be perceived and measured by an empirical methodology⁴⁵", and which are the bases of the realist conception of hegemony. Instead, he identifies three dimensions of power: overt, covert and structural. The overt form is the classic control model: power of A over B. The second is an indirect, or hidden, form of the first and usually associated with organizational relationships (setting of agendas, non-decisions, etc.). "The third dimension is that of structural power, which may involve material and normative aspects."⁴⁶ Overt and covert power may gradually become structural. The example Gill gives is the tastes and cultures in "less-developed countries" where both elites and masses are involved, with different degrees, in an emulation of Western culture. "Such structures of cultural dependence may ultimately make it difficult for people to envisage a simpler, more self-reliant and

⁴⁵ Stephen Gill, American Hegemony and the Trilateral Commission, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 63.

⁴⁶ Stephen Gill and David Law, The Global Political Economy, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 77.

egalitarian form (of) development."⁴⁷ This dimension is the most important in "world hegemony" as it concerns the setting of rules, norms and principles of behaviour consistent with the hegemon's interests.

In fact Gill's conception of "world hegemony" is useful to the purpose of our comparison. In spite of his self-declared historical materialist approach, the connotation of his conception is nearer to that of the realists. The initial Gramscian notion of hegemony gives way to an actor-centred, power-based and inter-state conception of hegemony. So, "world hegemony" is used as a description of an inter-state power relation, not of a world order.

It is Robert Cox who proposes a radically different conception of "world hegemony". Building upon the Gramscian distinction between hegemony and dictatorship which was current in the circles of the Third International, Cox *distinguishes the concept of hegemony from that of domination*. In this sense, hegemony is more than a power relation, it includes the consent of subordinate classes, and, therefore, it includes incorporation and not merely domination⁴⁸. This incorporation is, in part, based on the creation of a set of *universally-perceived norms, values and rules*. In this sense, the normative aspect of "world hegemony" is brought to the fore. Also, the power dimension is considered as more-than-domination, i.e. the incorporation aspect is considered vital and

⁴⁷ Stephen Gill and David LAW, The Global Political Economy, p. 75.

⁴⁸ Robert W.Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method". Millennium, vol. 12, n° 2, p. 163 and p. 170.

distinctive to the hegemonic relationship. On this point, Cox surely presents a genuine contribution to the conceptualization of "world hegemony". Nevertheless, this contribution is not complete. Incorporation, in Gramscian analysis, is more than a "false consciousness" of the subordinate groups. It is based on their identification of concrete gains in the hegemonic order. Cox is fully aware of this element in Gramsci's analysis. In his account of the later's conception of hegemony, he confirms that:

It (bourgeois hegemony) necessarily involved concessions to subordinate classes in return for acquiescence in bourgeois leadership, concessions which could lead ultimately to forms of social democracy.⁴⁹

Yet, when it comes to analyzing "world hegemony", Cox speaks only of co-optation:

Elite talent from peripheral countries is co-opted into international institutions in the manner of *Trasformismo*. [...] Hegemony is like a pillow: it absorbs blows and sooner or later the would-be assailant would find it comfortable to rest upon⁵⁰.

This is quite different from the *concession spirit* of which Gramsci speaks. Even if hegemony is not reduced to domination as was the case with all the previously-mentioned authors, incorporation into "world hegemony" in Coxian analysis is primarily based on co-optation, elite-betrayal or, at best, false consciousness. In any case, it does not lead to the transformation of hegemony itself which seems able to "absorb" all kinds of blows.

⁴⁹ Robert W. Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony...", p. 163.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p. 173.

The other major landmark of Cox's conception of "world hegemony" is its relation to the *actor-structure dichotomy* and to *inter-state relations*. Robert Cox considers "world hegemony" to be more than an inter-state relationship, although the state remains central to his conception. There is a delicate duality in the role of state vis-à-vis "world hegemony":

Hegemony at the international level is thus not merely an order among states. It is an order within a world economy with a dominant mode of production which penetrates into all countries and links into other subordinate modes of production. It is also a complex of international social relationships which connect the social classes of the different countries. World hegemony is describable as a social structure, an economic structure, and a political structure; and it cannot be simply one of these things but must be the three. World hegemony, furthermore, is expressed in universal norms, institutions and mechanisms which lay down general rules of behaviour for states and for those forces of civil society that act across national boundaries-rules which support the dominant mode of production.⁵¹

The main features of this long definition are: 1) "world hegemony" is a structure, a three-fold structure: social, political and economic. 2) It has a national base but it tends to reproduce itself on a global scale, thus it is *inherently globalizing*. 3) It defines the rules of behaviour for both states and social forces.

Thus, the constitution of a "world hegemony" depends on the action of a state, yet its effects go beyond the inter-state system. Actually, "a world hegemonic order can be founded only by a country in which social

⁵¹ Robert W.Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony...", pp. 171-172.

hegemony has been or being achieved⁵². So, for each hegemonic world order, there is a state at its centre. The role of this state is to defend this hegemonic order, of which it extracts considerable gains. *"World hegemony" describes the structures of the world order, not any of its actors.* In his analysis of the history of world orders, Cox identifies two major hegemonic periods: that of 1845-1875 with Great Britain at its centre, and the other from 1945 to 1965 with the United States at its centre. The in-between periods are non-hegemonic as the "prevalent collective image" of the world order foundered and the leading state's power was challenged⁵³. This means that the realist "preponderant power" is necessary for "world hegemony", but it is not a sufficient condition for its emergence, and it is surely not in itself the "world hegemony"⁵⁴. In this perspective, *"world hegemony" is not an actor, it is a structure, a historical structure.*

One more dimension of this basically different connotation, is the relation Cox establishes between "world hegemony" and the "administration" of the international system. Hegemony includes by definition the existence of a prevalent set of rules and norms. But setting these rules and norms is not the task of "world hegemony", it is the function of one of its mechanisms: either the state, which lies at its centre, or the international institutions created in its framework. Thus, "world

⁵² Robert Cox, Production, Power and World Order, New York, Columbia University Press, 1987, p. 149.

⁵³ ibid.

⁵⁴ Robert Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory", in: Robert Keohane, Neorealism and its Critics, op.cit., p. 223.

hegemony" is not the stabilizer of the system, it is a stable world order, stabilized by other mechanisms; institutions, norms and values, etc. This aspect will have important incidence on our inter-paradigmatic comparison.

Yet, Cox's definition, in spite of its richness, gives rise to certain problems. Although the role of ideology is emphasized⁵⁵, his definition of "world hegemony" gives an acute precedence to the economic factors which determine, *en dernière instance*, the content of rules set by hegemony. In his analysis of the history of world orders, Cox refers rarely to ideology when he deals with hegemonic historical structures. In the theoretical framework of his major work⁵⁶, the word ideology does not figure at all. Actually, it is production, and its consequent social relations that dominate his analysis of world orders.

In addition, the dual role of state as one-among-other "hegemony bearers" is frequently reduced to the role of state as the only "hegemony bearer". In a latter article, Cox refers more to the role of the state in the "world hegemony" and much less to other social forces:

... a concept of hegemony that is based on a coherent conjunction or fit between a configuration of material power, the prevalent collective image of world order (including certain norms) and a set of institutions which administer the order with a certain semblance of universality (that is, not

⁵⁵ See for example: Robert Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory", in: Robert Keohane, ed., Neorealism and Its Critics, New York, Columbia University Press, 1986, pp. 204-254 and especially pp. 217-222.

⁵⁶ Robert Cox, Production, Power and World Orders, pp. 1-9.

just as the overt instruments of a particular state's dominance).⁵⁷

Social forces disappear in the shade while the state is brought back to the front. In addition, the "social structure of world hegemony" gives way to the combination of political and economic structures. In other words, to the Realist combination of power and wealth.

As Cox's definition of "world hegemony" describes the structures of the world order, it recalls two other Realist concepts: the "political framework" of Robert Gilpin and the "International Regimes" of Krasner, Keohane and others.

Echoing Cox's "world hegemony", the political framework of Gilpin describes the structures of a world order, not any of its actors. This framework is composed of three elements: a dominant (hegemonic) state, an affinity of interests that bind major actors (states) together, and a shared ideological commitment⁵⁸. These are almost the same elements that constitute "world hegemony" in Cox's conception. First, Gilpin's "dominant hegemonic power" is Cox's state "at the centre of a hegemonic world order". The main difference is that Gilpin calls it in itself a hegemony, while Cox attributes this quality to the historical structure that includes it (what Gilpin calls "political framework"). Secondly, the set of shared interests, is near to the "set of institutions" referred to by Cox: the two are mutually interdependent as Cox claims that the main functions of these institutions are to administer the interests of the

⁵⁷ Robert Cox, "Social Forces...", pp. 222-223.

⁵⁸ Robert Gilpin, "The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism", p. 312.

dominant actors. Besides, in the *Pax Britannica*, according to Cox, the level of institutionalization was very low, which means that this is not a vital condition for his conception of "world hegemony". The third element in Gilpin's definition, the "shared ideological commitment" is nothing more than Cox's "prevalent collective image of world order". In sum, the Coxian concepts of "world hegemony" is much closer, if not identical, to Gilpin's "political framework" than to other Marxian notions of hegemony.

Moreover, the Coxian conception of "world hegemony" has certain elements in common with the Realist concept of "international regimes". The latter has been collectively defined, and expressed by Krasner as:

...sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations⁵⁹.

As it might be expected, there is no consensus over this definition among Realists. Keohane introduces certain modifications on the meanings of norms and principles. But overall this definition accounts for the concept of international regime. If we examine this definition carefully, we will find that it describes, in Coxian terms, a hegemonic world order, but on sector-by-sector bases. Cox defines "world hegemony" as follows:

World hegemony, furthermore, is expressed in universal norms, institutions and mechanisms which lay down general rules of behaviour for states and for those forces of civil society that act across national boundaries-rules which support the dominant mode of production⁶⁰.

⁵⁹ Krasner, quoted in: Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony*, p. 57.

⁶⁰ Robert W. Cox, "Social Forces...", pp. 171-172.

Both this definition and that of the international regime revolve around the existence of a set of rules, principles, norms and institutions (or, in more general terms; decision-making procedures) that govern behaviour on the international scene. The only, and basic, difference between these two definitions is the role that Cox gives to social forces while the international regime depends more on inter-state relations. Here, the distinctiveness of both Realist and Marxian traditions are again meaningful. But once more, this difference concerns the used approach, not the connotation of the concept itself. In other words, the three concepts in question have the same connotation: they refer to the existence of consensual structures that govern international behaviour. Cox calls this connotation a "world hegemony" while Gilpin calls it "political framework" and Keohane et al. call it "international regimes". Regardless of the term used, the point is that the common features between these connotations are much bigger and more significant than those defined along paradigmatic lines. These terms, altogether, describe a phenomenon of a different category than that described by the actor-centred, power-based, and inter-state-relation conception of "world hegemony" .

In sum, the distinction between Realist and Marxist traditions in international political economy are less useful to the understanding of the concept of "world hegemony". On the one hand, basic features are common to definitions presented by scholars belonging to these two traditions. On the other, basic differences distinguish definitions presented by scholars belonging to the same tradition. The two criteria proposed in this chapter (the position vis-à-vis the actor-structure and

the level of analysis) prove to be more telling. Using the first criterion, two basic connotations can be identified: the first is centred on the actor, where "world hegemony" describes a preponderance in its capabilities in relation to other actors. Hence, it describes primarily, and sometimes exclusively, a power relation. This is the connotation referred to by all above-mentioned scholars but Robert Cox. The other connotation is centred on the structures of the world order themselves. In this sense, "world hegemony" refers to the existence of consensual rules, norms and values that govern the behaviour of actors. This connotation is that of Cox' conception of "world hegemony", of Gilpin's "political framework", and of what is known among Realists as "international regimes".

The second criterion, the level of analysis, provides a useful insight in this classification. The actor-centred notion of "world hegemony" is usually associated with an inter-state level of analysis. This is the case of all mentioned scholars except for Cox. The structural notion attempts to go beyond this inter-state level. The "political framework" of Gilpin resorts to changes in the dominant ideology and to the role of anti-liberal social forces to apprehend the collapse of the "political framework" that dominated the postwar period⁶¹. Still, his analysis remains basically at inter-state level. As for the concept of "international regime", it is strictly state-centered. It describes the conditions that permits the emergence of inter-state cooperation in specific sectors. It does not go beyond this level as it does not attempt

⁶¹ Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy of International Relations, especially chapter 9, pp. 341-363.

to explain why these conditions exist. And that is exactly what the Coxian notion of "world hegemony" pretends to do. While it incorporates the inter-state system into the analysis, it seeks to apprehend it in relation to social forces, production, and, at least theoretically, ideology.

B. THE CONTESTABILITY OF "WORLD HEGEMONY" CONCEPT

In light of the previous discussion, the characteristics of the concept that gave rise to its "essential contestation" (its multiple connotations, its normativity, and its open-ended denotations) become less relevant.

1. The normative character of the concept

This character takes at least three forms: the first concerns hegemony's value (benign or exploitative), the second revolves around its relation to the dominant economic ideology (liberalism and/or capitalism), the third concerns its relation to specific historical experiences (globalization and capitalism).

The positive value-judgement that underpins Realist notions of "world hegemony" usually reflects an ideological commitment to an international liberal order. Without prejudice to this commitment in

itself, its implicit character obstructs the clarity and exactitude of the Realist conception in two ways.

First, it directs the overall analysis towards the maintaining or the restoration of a specific world order (characterized by the existence of a "world hegemony") or at least the overcoming of the problems resulting from its end. The immediate consequence is the adoption of a "problem-solving" approach at the expense of a theoretical and critical examination of the phenomenon itself. The focal point in these analysis becomes much more oriented towards *praxis* than interested in theoretical clarity and exactitude.

Second, it intensifies the other contested aspects of the concept in question. As the focus is on the "management" of the international system, different connotations become necessarily involved, as many as the terms and concepts used to apprehend "international management". Leadership, Hegemony, International Regimes, International Cooperation, International Order, International Institutions, etc.. are all concepts involved in the explanation of "international system management" and are usually confounded and/or associated with "world hegemony". Equally, denotations become endless as any historical era characterized by "international management", preferably liberal, can serve as a case.

On the other hand, the Marxian negative value-judgement of "world hegemony" obstructs the clarity of the concept in the opposite way. As the focus is almost entirely on the exploitative character of "world hegemony", Marxists easily fail to grasp the difference between hegemony and domination. Sometimes, as is the case with Arrighi, "world hegemony"

is confounded with imperialism. Consequently, the concept becomes a sort of pleonasm and its potential as an instrument to apprehend specific social phenomena is wasted. In addition, this leads to the adoption of an essentialist and functionalist vision of hegemony instead of conceptualizing it as a set of *social relations*. "World hegemony" in this sense is identified as a corollary of Capitalism or as one of its means, not as a complex of social relations that are anchored in specific time-space configurations. Hence, the theoretical potential of studying the various configurations, the internal dynamics and the possible transformations of "world hegemony" is scarified. In addition, the functionalist bias renders the concept of "world hegemony" a kind of conceptual "pillow" capable of absorbing all theoretical "blows" and of explaining all sorts of social phenomena.

The other two forms of normative underpinnings of the concept, its relation to Capitalism and to globalization, concern basically the Marxists. As Arrighi identifies "world hegemony" with imperialism, Wallerstein identifies it with Capitalism (or liberalism), and Cox identifies it with Globalization. Despite the fact that, historically, "world hegemony(ies)" were capitalist, liberal, imperialist, or globalizing, there is no automatic link between "world hegemony" and those phenomena. Such an automatic link is a consequence of the failure to distinguish between the connotation and the denotation of the concept in question. "World hegemony", as a concept, does not have a specific or inherent social connotation, either capitalist, socialist or other. Considered as an inter-state power relation or as a consensual

international structure. "world hegemony" is a concept that might have different, and even opposed, denotations. The fact that its historical denotations are usually described as capitalist, imperial or globalizing does not establish a necessary link between the concept and these denotations. Gramsci, for instance, was examining the plausibility of socialist hegemony, and Cox himself envisages the possibility of building a "world hegemony" based on the breakdown of globalization. So, there is no *necessary* relationship between the hegemonic phenomenon and globalization. Neither is there such a relation between the former and Capitalism or Liberalism.

Nevertheless, this concept is not unique in containing normative elements. In fact, "it is impossible [...] to purge concepts from their contested appraisive dimension⁶²". Neither is normativity inherent to it. Normative elements might be subject to explicit acknowledgment. Thus, illusionary objectivity can be excluded, conceptual confusions avoided, and a more exact understanding of the concept made possible. From this stand point, the concept is not "essentially contested", it is rather presented in a contested fashion. "World hegemony", can be approached as a social phenomenon that is taking place in explicitly specified time/space contexts. Normative elements can be introduced at a latter stage, if desired. But there is nothing *essentially* normative in the concept of "world hegemony".

⁶² David Rapkin, "The Contested Concept of Hegemonic Leadership", p. 4.

2. The multiple connotations of "world hegemony"

Connolly's objection revolves around the multiplicity of the connotations of the "world hegemony" concept. Moreover, it refers to other terms that have, in turn, multiple connotations. A long list of these connotations can be drawn. On the Realist side: Leadership, International Regimes, International Cooperation, International Order, International Institutions, International public goods, Hegemonic war, etc. On the Marxist side: Hegemonic regulation, Imperialism, Domination, Dependence, Ideology, Class, Long cycles, etc. It is evident that the multiplicity of connotations of the original concept, and of its associated term renders risky, if not impossible, its utilisation in a coherent and exact way.

Yet, the examination of the Realist and Marxian notions of "world hegemony" revealed two significant features. First, this concept is used to describe two different categories of international phenomena: the supremacy of one state over others, and the quality of a given world order. Second, inside each category, there are basic characteristics which are common among both Realists and Marxists. Accordingly, the concept of "world hegemony" has only two connotations. The first concerns the inter-state power relations. Whenever a given state possesses a preponderance in power resources (defined either in empirical or/and in structural terms) in relation to other states, to the point that it can exercise a *relationship of domination* over them, this state is called a "world hegemony". This connotation is compatible with all previously discussed Realist conceptions as well as those of Wallerstein, Arrighi and, to a certain extent, Gill. This connotation is actor-centred, power-based, and

uses inter-state relations as its level of analysis. Hence, it uses the term "hegemony" in a metaphoric manner, i.e. in applying a concept of social relations to an *inter-state* relationship.

The other connotation refers to a description of the structures of a world order. A hegemonic world order is one in which exists a set of norms, rules, principles and decision-making procedures. A set that is agreed-on and considered to be universal, transparent and beneficial to most of, if not all, actors. This structural connotation, mainly referred to by Cox, goes beyond power relations and includes the establishment of a normative consensus, and it uses the overall relations among nations (states and social forces combined) as its level of analysis.

Consequently, the multiplicity of connotations can be reduced to only two connotations. Even if certain differences between the multiple conceptions are more or less simplified, this categorization conserves its validity. It demonstrates that the concept is not, *per se*, of multiple connotations.

3. The open-ended denotations of "world hegemony" concept

This third argument of "essential contestation" can be rejected for two reasons. First, the denotations are not so open-ended as the "contestation" presupposes. Although slight differences exist over the exact beginnings and ends of historical periods, there is a general agreement to describe both the second half of the nineteenth century and

the post-1945 period as hegemonic eras (or as British and American "hegemonies" depending on the connotation referred to). Only Hispanic sixteenth century and the Netherlands' seventeenth century are debatable. This is also the case of the world order from 1973 onward.

Second, once the normative character is acknowledged explicitly and its consequent conceptual confusion dealt with, and the basic connotations identified, it becomes much easier to define the historical applicability of the concept. Hence, the connotation which revolves around an inter-state relationship would definitely have different denotations from those of the other connotation. In this case, the "multiplicity of denotations" will be reduced, and will be identifiable along intelligible theoretical lines.

C. CONCLUSION

In sum, this chapter examined the basic characteristics of the conceptualization of "world hegemony" by both Realists and Marxists. It demonstrated through this examination that there are two major connotations of the said concept: the first is actor-centred and considers hegemony as an inter-state power relation. This conception is shared by Kindleberger, Krasner, Strange, Kennedy, Gilpin, Keohane, Wallerstein, Arrighi and, to a certain extent, Gill. The second is structural and revolves around the description of the world order itself. This conception is proposed by Cox, but shared, with certain nuances concerning the level of analysis and the scale of applicability, by Gilpin and Keohane under

the titles of "Political Framework" and "International Regimes" consequently.

Also, there is a consensus over the basic elements of each of these two connotations. The first connotation generally includes four dimensions: the perception of hegemony as a description of an actor; as a preponderance of power resources of this actor; as an inter-state relationship; and as administering the international system. The other connotation emphasizes the perception of hegemony as a quality of the structures of a world order in which exist; a prevalent ideology; a set of agreed-upon rules and norms; an affinity of major states' interests; and a central state defending this order. In this sense, it does not approach hegemony as a mere power relation, but emphasizes also its normative dimension. In addition, this connotation attempts to go beyond the inter-state level and incorporate social forces into the analysis.

Thus, the contestation of the concept, addressed by Connolly's three-fold critique, loses much of its validity. The normative aspect associated with "world hegemony" is not inherent to the concept. Thus, it can be overcome by more exactitude and explicitness in its usage. The multiplicity of its connotations and its open-ended denotations are radically reduced and apprehended on intelligible and justified theoretical lines. This, in turn, delimits the concept's historical denotations. In sum, the contested characteristics are inherent neither to the concept, nor to the phenomenon itself. In this sense, it has nothing *essential* in it.

However, the concept of "world hegemony" raises certain questions about its explanatory power. This concept is widely used to account for world politics' issues, such as those of international cooperation and regulation. Still, its capacity to go beyond the mere description of their developments and to provide genuine explanations for their dynamics, is questionable. The next chapter discusses the way in which this concept is used to account for these issues in an attempt to explore, and to understand the origins of the limits of its explanatory power.

CHAPTER II: THE LIMITS OF THE EXPLANATORY POWER OF THE "WORLD HEGEMONY"
CONCEPT

The use of the "world hegemony" concept has been associated with the debate over the decline of "American hegemony". The latter is presented as an explanatory factor for world politics issues, such as international cooperation and international regulation⁶³. The argument of this chapter is two-fold: on the one hand, I argue that the present conceptions of "world hegemony" fail to go beyond mere descriptions and to provide genuine *explanations* for phenomena in question. On the other hand, this chapter claims that these inadequacies are *inherent* to the used connotation. Thus, any effort to render the said concept more useful must start by redefining its connotation.

To support this two-fold argument, this chapter is divided into three sections. The first presents a summary of the debate over "American hegemony" and its relation to international cooperation and regulation. The second section examines the limits of the explanatory power of the concept as it is used by major parties in this debate. These limits will be analyzed in reference to three examples of international cooperation and regulation: the cooperation for the protection of the environment; the GATT negotiations; and the coordination of aid programs to Central and

⁶³ A non-exhaustive list of this literature would include: Charles Kindleberger, Robert Keohane, Robert Gilpin, Stephen Krasner, Susan Strange, Stephen Gill, Robert Cox, Giovanni Arrighi, and others (all are referred to in chapter I).

Eastern European Countries (CEEC) and ex-USSR. The third section detects the origins of these limits. A conclusion sums up and crystallizes the chapter's argument.

A. THE DEBATE OVER "AMERICAN HEGEMONY"

By mid-1970s, a debate took place over the role of the United States in the world economy and its impact on international cooperation and regulation. In this debate, one can identify two main trends: the tenants of the "hegemonic stability theory" and the advocates of the would-be "International Regimes theory". Roughly, the first emphasized the primordial role of "world hegemony" in the establishment and in the maintenance of international cooperation and regulation. The latter, in contrast, emphasized the role of international institutions and of the "bounded rationality" of states in maintaining and promoting this cooperation⁶⁴. A parallel debate took place over the idea of the "decline of American hegemony". Authors belonging to both "hegemonic stability theory" and "international regimes theory", such as Gilpin and Keohane respectively, took the side of a net (or relative) decline in "American hegemony". Others insisted on its persistence, either in its traditional

⁶⁴ For a brief but strong illustration of this debate, see: Robert Keohane, "The Theory of Hegemonic Stability and Changes in International Economic Regimes", in Ole R. Holsti et al., ed., Changes in International System, Colorado, Westview Press, 1980.

form (Joseph Nye), or in a new shape (Susan Strange and Stephen Gill)⁶⁵.
A matrix of positions in these two debates would take the following shape:

(American) hegemony	Decisive (A)	Marginal (B)
Declined (1)	- Hegemonic stability theory (Gilpin, Kindleberger.) - Robert Cox, Giovanni Arrighi, etc.	inter'l Regimes theory (Keohane, Krasner.)
Persists (2)	- Nye - Theories of Structural Hegemony (Strange and Gill)	

This matrix gives us three basic positions in both of the two debates: those who attribute a decisive role to "world hegemony" in international cooperation and regulation and for whom "American hegemony" is in decline (A1), those who share the previous' opinion over the role of "world hegemony" but claim that the Unites States remains hegemonic (A2), and finally those who share the opinion of a decline in "American hegemony", but minimize its consequences for international cooperation (B1). I will focus only on the first two positions. The third, that of Strange, Gill and Nye, differs from the second only as far as the capacities of the Unites States are concerned, which is less important to our question.

⁶⁵ For details of this debate, see: Robert Gilpin, "The Politics of the Transnational Economic Relations", in: Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye Jr., Transnational Relations In World Politics, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 193 (1970), pp. 48-69, Joseph Nye, Jr., Bound To Lead, New York, Basic Books, 1990, Susan Strange, "The persistent Myth of Lost Hegemony", International Organization, vol. 41, n° 4, Autumn 1987, and: Stephen Gill, American Hegemony and the Trilateral Commission, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990.

1. Gilpin and the theory of "hegemonic stability"

Robert Gilpin's analysis is an outstanding example of the "hegemonic stability theory". His position is based upon his appreciation of the relation between politics and economy:

Politics determines the framework of economic activity and channels it in directions which tend to serve the political objectives of dominant political groups and organization. Throughout history each successive hegemonic power has organized economic space in terms of its own interests and purposes⁶⁶.

Consequently, the post-war global world economy has depended on the "objectives and interests" of the United States. In other words, it depended on the political configuration created by the dominance of this country.

American leadership and the alliance framework provided a secure and stable basis for the development of global economic relations.[...] American initiatives in the area of trade led to successive rounds of tariff liberalization. The dollar served as the basis of the international monetary system, while American foreign aid, direct investment, and technology facilitated the rapid development of advanced and certain less developed economies. [...] American hegemony provided the favourable environment within which supply and demand forces created an era of unprecedented growth and an increasingly open international economy⁶⁷.

The coming to an end of this configuration without the emergence of another dominant political "group or organization" would create a sort of ambiguity and uncertainty that undermines the functioning of "global market". By the 1980s, the United States became either unable or unwilling

⁶⁶ Robert Gilpin, "The Politics of Transnational Economic relations", p. 53.

⁶⁷ Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy of International Relations, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1987, pp. 343-344.

to define the rules of the world economy and to assume the responsibilities attached to this role. The result is that "[c]ritical problems of the world economy in the areas of trade, money, and debt were left unresolved."⁶⁸ The bottom line in Gilpin's analysis is that:

The relative decline of American hegemony has seriously undermined the stable political framework that sustained the expansion of a liberal world economy in the postwar era...⁶⁹

This has created a "hegemony crisis" as no other state proved to be able and willing to assume the responsibilities of a "world hegemony": neither Japan, Germany, nor the embryonic European Community seem to qualify for this role. Historically, according to Gilpin, this situation was solved by a "hegemonic war" out of which a victorious new hegemon emerges, something that seems excluded in the nuclear age. Consequently, the "hegemony crisis" seems to have no solution. The ultimate solution would be either a collective leadership or a coordination among the major powers in the world, but:

The fundamental problem of policy coordination and pluralist management, however, is not its inherent desirability or its technical feasibility, but the political problem of the absence of common purposes. [...] The history of economic summitry since 1975 indicates that few, if any, of the major economic powers have been willing to accept the type of policy coordination recommended.⁷⁰

He concludes that these political differences make policy coordination and pluralist leadership "highly unlikely"⁷¹. This does not entail that international cooperation and regulation frameworks would disappear

⁶⁸ Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy... p. 345.

⁶⁹ ibid., p. 351.

⁷⁰ ibid., p. 369.

⁷¹ ibid., p. 378.

immediately. Gilpin admits that "international economic regimes seldom collapse all at once"⁷², and he notices that the United States and its allies have taken "arrangements to maintain the remnants of the economic regimes" in place⁷³. Yet:

The danger in the 1980s and beyond has been that an economic or political crisis might shatter the increasingly fragile regimes associated with declining American hegemony.⁷⁴

In this perspective, Gilpin speculates on the fate of the GATT system. The latter, which was designed in the post-war era to establish a world-wide accepted set of rules for the conduct of commercial policy, is under severe attack since the 1970s. He attributes this attack to seven factors, of which six concern the position of "American hegemony": the end of the floating exchange rates' system, the OPEC "revolution", the Japanese competition, the rise of the NICs, the strengthening of the EEC, and the decline of the American economy. The seventh is the emergence of global stagflation.⁷⁵ The rise in oil prices induced inflationary pressures, imposed an acute problem of adjustment on industries, and depressed the world economy at large. The entry of NICs and Japanese competition increased the number of exporters in a time of shrinking world trade, which fuelled the demands for protectionism to safeguard the living standards in the advanced countries. This trend was strengthened by the decline of the American economy. The enlargement and increasing enclosure

⁷² Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy..., p. 378.

⁷³ ibid.

⁷⁴ ibid., pp. 351-352.

⁷⁵ ibid., p. 193.

of the European Community meant that its economy was becoming more of a regional system than a component in an open global market:

Thus, by the late 1970s, several broad changes begun to erode the GATT system of trade liberalization. As tariff barriers within the GATT have fallen, nontariff barriers in most countries have risen.⁷⁶

Although the Tokyo round (1973-1979) had achieved a wide range of liberalizing measures, the developments in the 1980s does not suggest that a significant progress could be achieved. The high tariff barriers which characterized the "old protectionism" gave way, with the successive GATT rounds, to a "new protectionism". The latter is composed basically of "a proliferation array of non-tariff barriers and other devices"⁷⁷. It also involve a more active role of the state in trade patterns, through export subsidies, credit guarantees and tax incentive to certain industries, and, more importantly, the "voluntary export restraints and orderly market arrangements, or what the French euphemistically call organized free trade"⁷⁸. This "new protectionism hits the United States as well as its allies, and presses for a continuing shift in American position from "free trade" to "fair trade". This shift, combined with the effects of domestic policies (especially Reaganomics) and the expanding importance of strategic trade policy, undermines the prospects of a liberal trade regime in the world.⁷⁹

In a highly interdependent world composed of powerful illiberal economies, the GATT principles of nondiscrimination,

⁷⁶ ibid., p. 195.

⁷⁷ ibid., p.204.

⁷⁸ ibid., p. 204.

⁷⁹ ibid., for more details see pp. 204-228.

National Treatment, and Most Favored Nation may no longer be appropriate⁸⁰

Indeed, Gilpin declares that the Tokyo round might be the last of the GATT rounds, and that the subsequent trade arrangements be made on bilateral (or trilateral) basis.⁸¹ In conclusion, what would come out of this "non-hegemonic" context is a "mixed system" of mercantilistic competition, economic regionalism, and sectorial protectionism⁸².

2. Keohane and the post-hegemonic International Regimes

Robert Keohane takes clearly an opposite position in the debate over international cooperation and "American hegemony":

International cooperation can be maintained [...] in the absence of American hegemony. [...] The common interests of the leading capitalist states, bolstered by the effects of existing international regimes [...], are strong enough to make sustained cooperation possible, though not inevitable.⁸³

Keohane admits that "American hegemony" has come to an end, as the title of his book declares provocatively. But the end of this "hegemony" did not and does not entail a similar and necessary end to international cooperation. As the citation above indicates, this position is based on

⁸⁰ Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy..., p. 393.

⁸¹ ibid., p. 199.

⁸² For more details on this scenario, see: ibid., pp. 394-406.

⁸³ Robert Keohane, After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Politics, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1984, p. 43.

two pillars: an appreciation of the role of international institutions, and the principle of "bounded rationality".

The principal effect of international institutions is not that they impose norms or constraints, but that they provide states with a useful framework for action. Using game theory analysis, models of collective action, and the theory of market failure⁸⁴, Keohane presents three arguments: the first is that in an iterated "prisoner dilemma", both players have less incentives to defect, in other words they have more incentive to cooperate as the interaction is repeated on a substantial period of time. A non-cooperative behaviour, even if more beneficial in the short run, is surely more harmful as the other player will modify his/her calculations accordingly by the subsequent interaction. "Thus even insofar as international negotiations can be modeled in the simple form of Prisoners' Dilemma [...], the pessimistic standard conclusion of single-play Prisoners' Dilemma does not follow."⁸⁵ The second argument is based on Olson's model of collective action. This model claims that small groups might be more able to establish cooperation among themselves and to provide the "public goods" usually associated with the hegemon. This ability depends, partly, on their ability to monitor each other's behaviour and to react accordingly. This creates a situation "similar to that of iterated Prisoners' Dilemma"⁸⁶. The third argument, which is derived from the market failure theory, concerns the nature of international interactions themselves. The latter are characterized

⁸⁴ Robert Keohane, After Hegemony, p. 78.

⁸⁵ ibid., p. 76.

⁸⁶ ibid., pp. 76-77.

increasingly by their complexity and by the density of their issues. In this sort of interactions, the incentive to establish a "regime" of cooperation is higher as ad hoc agreements might interfere with one another especially on issues of high density and imperfect information.⁸⁷ International institutions provide a framework that enables states to monitor each other's behaviour, to administer complex interactions in issues of high density, and to deal with the imperfect state of their information⁸⁸. In this sense, international institutions, which were designed basically by the United States in the postwar era⁸⁹, are able to persist and to develop in a post-hegemonic context.

The other pillar upon which Keohane's position stands is the principle of bounded rationality. This is a redefinition of the classical Realist assumption of the egoist individual (or government) who is seeking to maximize his/her self interest (or national interest). The idea of bounded rationality is simply an application of this classical idea in the contemporary complex interdependent world. Keohane breaks the link that Realists established between the perception of the international arena as a place of anarchy, and the inevitability of conflict⁹⁰. In this sense, Keohane claims that even an egoist self-interested state would have a

⁸⁷ Robert Keohane, After Hegemony, pp. 78-79.

⁸⁸ ibid., p. 97.

⁸⁹ For more details on this point, see : ibid., pp. 139-181.

⁹⁰ Although this attempt has given rise to an intra-realist debate in what has become known as «relative versus absolute gains» debate. For details see: David Baldwin, Neorealism and Neoliberalism: the contemporary debate, Columbia University Press, N.Y., 1993.

strong incentive to enter into international cooperation frameworks: structural conditions of complex interdependence make it almost impossible (or irrationally expensive) to try to maximize their profits without cooperation. These conditions are the uncertainty about the future especially in domestic politics and the desire to bind the potential successors, the multiplicity of players in the international realm, the reiteration of the interactions, and the imperfect condition of information as well as the density of issues at stake.⁹¹ As Keohane puts it:

...classical rationality is an idealization. It makes more sense to view individuals -and especially governments- as constrained in their abilities to make calculations. It is costly for them to gather information and to make decisions. Under such conditions, the rules and principles of international regimes become even more useful [...]: decisionmaking costs can be saved by automatically obeying regime rules rather than calculation the costs and benefits in each individual case⁹².

In sum, the international institutions created by "American hegemony" are most likely to persist and to develop as they provide states with frameworks that facilitate their action in an increasingly interdependent world. Even with the decline of "American hegemony", and to some extent because of this decline, these institutions have a more important role to play as they are the sole remnant providers of "public goods" in the international system.

⁹¹ Robert Keohane, After Hegemony, pp. 110-116.

⁹² ibid., p. 110.

Keohane applies this analysis to the GATT system (or regime) as well as to the cooperation for the protection of the environment⁹³. He analyzes the GATT from the 1950s until the conclusion of the Tokyo-round as an illustration of a hegemonic regime, a framework that is maintained by continuous hegemonic intervention. This was clear in the efforts made by the United States during the 1950s to pressure European governments to go further, then to persuade them to accept Japan as a contracting party and to compensate the Japanese against discrimination by Europeans. This is also valid regarding the United States' tolerance vis-a-vis European protectionism during the 1960s. An attitude that will come under attack in the 1970s and especially in the 1980s.⁹⁴ With the decline of "American hegemony", the GATT principles became increasingly on the defensive, yet cooperation persists. Keohane here distinguishes between free-trade and cooperation in trade (what he calls trade regime): "[i]n certain perhaps perverse ways, cooperation has increased in world trade as protectionism has risen".⁹⁵ He cites the example of the international textile and apparel regime which has been solidified during the 1980s while becoming more protectionist. "The purpose of cooperation have changed more than the fact of the cooperation itself".⁹⁶ This might very well apply to the GATT: cooperation persists, but not necessarily free-trade.

⁹³ Concerning the latter, see: Peter M. Haas, Marc A. Levy, and Robert O. Keohane, "Institutions for the Earth: promoting International Environmental Protection", *Environment*, vol. 34, n° 4, May 1992, pp. 12-36.

⁹⁴ Robert Keohane, *After hegemony*, pp. 148-149.

⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 190.

⁹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 190.

In the realm of environment protection, Keohane et al. reemphasize the faith in international institutions and their impact on states' behaviour:

Effective institutions can influence the political process at three key points in the environmental policy implementation process: by contributing to more appropriate agendas and reflecting the convergence of political and technical consensus about the nature of environmental threats; by contributing to more comprehensive and specific international policies agreed upon through a political process whose core is intergovernmental bargaining; and by contributing to national policy responses that directly control sources of environmental degradation.⁹⁷

They follow a distinction (made by a Harvard study project) between four categories of states according to their responses to international institutions' obligations: the "laggards", who either ignore these obligations or accept them but fail to carry out their share of them, and the "leaders", who commit themselves to such obligations or surpass them willingly. This study, which is adopted by Keohane et al., associates the first category with states that do not possess the scientific knowledge to assess environmental damage and therefore follow an attitude of "join the club" to receive assistance. The second category are those states which possess these scientific capacities and which are more damaged by non-cooperative attitudes. International institutions help "leaders" to "link" policies in their relations with "laggards". They also foster cooperation as they magnify public pressure on governments in their competition to appear more pro-environment. They also provide technical assistance and

⁹⁷ Marc A. Levy, Peter M. Haas, and Robert O. Keohane. "Institutions for the Earth". p. 13-14.

expertise, mechanisms of monitoring and verification services, etc.⁹⁸ In sum, the international cooperation in domains such as ozone protection, biodiversity and climate change, constitute an International Regime. Each state, in following its "national interest", finds incentives to abide by the rules, or at least to join the Regime. The existence of international institutions foster this behaviour and consolidates the Regime in question.

3. Cox's end of hegemonic order

Robert Cox agrees with the idea of the "end of hegemony", but his conception of "world hegemony" makes his position in this debate ambivalent. On the one hand, the "end of hegemony" in Cox's view does not necessarily mean the end of "American supremacy". As "[d]ominance by a powerful state may be a necessary but not a sufficient condition of hegemony"⁹⁹, the passage from a hegemonic world order to a non-hegemonic one does not imply necessarily the end of this dominance. Thus, Cox introduces his concept of a "tributary" world order, one in which only one superpower exists and defends certain kind of historic structures in return for specific privileges. According to Cox, this is the case with the actual world order: the United States is the only superpower and it

⁹⁸ Marc A. Levy et al., "Institutions for the Earth", pp. 14-17 and 29-30.

⁹⁹ Robert Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders", in: Robert Keohane, ed., Neorealism and Its Critics, New York, Columbia University Press, 1986, p. 223.

defends a hyperliberal globalizing world order, and in return it claims privileges such as the financing of its debt¹⁰⁰.

On the other hand, his major works suggest that the "dominance" of the United States in the world order, especially in the world economy, is diminishing¹⁰¹. The solution to this ambivalency is the decisive and transformative nature Cox attributes to *Pax Americana* (i.e. the hegemonic world order in which the US was at the centre). The postwar hegemony, according to Cox, led to an internationalization of production and of the state. The internationalization of production expanded through direct investment. "The essential feature of direct investment is possession not of money, but of knowledge-in the form of technology..."¹⁰². Simultaneously, the harmonization activities of international institutions, such as the IMF and the World Bank, and practices such as the consultations among agencies of different states, transformed the classical state structure:

This new informal corporative structure overshadowed the older more formalized national corporatism and reflected the dominance of the sector oriented to the world economy over the more nationally oriented sector of a country's economy.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Robert Cox, "Le dialectique de l'économie-monde en fin de siècle". Études internationales, vol. XXI, n° 4, December, 1990, p. 698.

¹⁰¹ Robert Cox, Production, Power, and World Order, New York, Columbia University Press, 1987, especially the discussion of Pax American in pages 211-267, also in: "Social Forces, States and World Orders", especially the comparison between Pax Britannica and Pax Americana in pages 221-225.

¹⁰² Robert Cox, "Social Forces...", p. 233.

¹⁰³ ibid., p. 232.

Related to this two-fold process is the transformation of the configuration of social forces. In Cox's view, a new, global class structure is taking shape world wide. At its top is the transnational managerial class composed of; managers of transnational institutions (such as those of the IMF, the World Bank, and the Trilateral Commission); managers of internationalized production; state officials in the internationalized sectors (such as Finance Ministry officials); local managers of sectors related to international production; and the established local workers of the internationalized production.¹⁰⁴ It is this two-fold process, and its consequences on social forces that brought about the end of the postwar hegemony. Thus, the position of the United States in the world economy is, in Cox's perspective, less significant. What is at stake is primarily the relevancy of the state framework: the *Pax Americana* has undermined this framework and initiated a conflict between two world orders: one is globalizing, hyperliberal and based on internationalized production, state and social forces. The other "is a nonhegemonic world structure of conflicting power centres"¹⁰⁵ based on neomercantilist states, national production, and national social forces. A third world order would be a counter-hegemonic order based on a coalition of Third World countries and certain social forces in the Centre: leftist groups and the marginalized. Cox admits that the latter is the least possible scenario.

¹⁰⁴ Robert Cox, "Social Forces...", pp. 234-236.

¹⁰⁵ ibid., p. 238.

Cox does not apply his conception of hegemony to questions of international cooperation and regulation, at least not directly. So I will try to see how his conception might be used in this regard. It seems appropriate to say that the distinctive element of Cox's conception is the transformative nature of postwar "world hegemony" and the consequent fragmentation of the state. In a matter like the GATT negotiation, therefore, the easiness/difficulty of more liberalization of trade does not depend on the conclusion of an agreement that settles differences *between states* but on the way in which differences *within states* are resolved. The success of the earlier rounds should be attributed to the prevalence of an image of world order compatible with the main features of the postwar hegemony. The difficulties begin with the eclipse of this image and the fragmentation of social forces inside each country. Thus, the confrontation is not expected, in this perspective, to be between the United States, Japan, France and/or other European countries. It is expected to be inside the United States, Japan, France and other European countries: between those who advocate the merits of a globalizing world economy (the global social forces in Cox's analysis) and those who try to keep the national framework meaningful (the national capital, state official, workers, etc.). The inter-state negotiations and whether or not a confrontation emerges depends on the ability of each side to instrumentalize the state apparatus to voice its claims. This judgement can also be applied to cooperation in the protection of the environment and to aid programmes to the CEEC and ex-USSR. Using Cox's conception of "world hegemony", one cannot predict a definite conclusion concerning cooperation in environmental issues. It would depend on the issue in

question: what does it represent in terms of interests to each side of social forces (global versus national). In aid programmes, the shape, modalities and rhythm of cooperation in aid programming would also depend on the social forces involved and their ability to affect state policies. In this sense, there is no necessary conclusion concerning international cooperation and regulation derived from the end of hegemony: cooperation might be more difficult as the hegemonic rules do not automatically function any more, but that does not entail an end to cooperation. All depends on the struggle of social forces in question.

B. THE LIMITS OF THE CONCEPT'S EXPLANATORY POWER

The three parties in this debate fail to provide convincing explanation of three issues concerning international cooperation and regulation. The first is the connection between the role of the United States in world affairs (what they call "American hegemony") and the changes in the possibilities of international cooperation and regulation. The second is the visible strengthening of international regulation at the same time that international cooperation is shrinking. And the third is the heterogeneity in the easiness and in the extent of international cooperation in different issues and sometimes at different times in the same issue. Using three examples of international cooperation and regulation, this section examines the limits of the current explanations that use the concept of "world hegemony".

1. The connection between international cooperation & regulation and American "hegemony"

The connection between the role of the United States in world affairs (whether is called "American hegemony", American leadership, or American supremacy) and the enhancement/decline in international cooperation and regulation is much less evident than this debate suggests. These schemes, whether proposed by Gilpin, Keohane or Cox, all relate the emergence of American leadership to the enhancement of cooperation and regulation, and the difficulties of these to the decline in American leadership, are misleading.

First, international cooperation was never as smooth as this scheme suggests, even in the heydays of American leadership. The GATT negotiations are a good example in this concern. The three authors (Gilpin, Keohane, and Cox) present the GATT negotiations as a progressive process that has seen increasing success under American leadership. The last round, that of Uruguay, was endangered by the decline in the capacity of the United States to create the necessary consensus for its conclusion. In this example, American leadership is presented as the explanatory factor of the difficulties in the GATT negotiation. In fact, the history of these negotiations does not support this argument. The GATT system was under attack since its beginning. Already in the 1950s, the liberalization of trade, according to Gilpin himself, was on the defensive with the

creation of the EEC and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)¹⁰⁶. Equally, the Kennedy Round in 1967 met various difficulties and finally failed to deal with several issues, such as nontariff barriers, the problem of LDCs, and agricultural products. "As in the late nineteenth century, however, the forces of economic nationalism continued to gain strength."¹⁰⁷ In addition, the Tokyo Round, which is described as "the most complex and wide-ranging trade negotiations ever",¹⁰⁸ and which constitutes a cornerstone in the GATT system, was concluded in a context of eroding American leadership: the period of 1973-1979 is usually referred to as that of the decline of the American role in world economy: following the end of the monetary system, the OPEC break of control, etc.

Secondly, the basic difficulties which confronted international cooperation and regulation were not of an inter-state nature. In other words, the divisions around the main issues of this cooperation were not drawn along *inter-state* lines but *within states*. That is where Cox's analysis has a clear advantage. By opposition, Keohane's scheme of self-interested calculating rational states seems to be a far reaching simplification of this cooperation. Both the GATT negotiations and the cooperation in environmental issues reveal the utopian character of this scheme. The difficulties and resistances encountered by the GATT negotiations were never identified on a national basis. The GATT

¹⁰⁶ Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy of International Relations, p. 192.

¹⁰⁷ ibid.

¹⁰⁸ ibid., p. 199.

confrontations were not about a free-tradist United States against a protectionist Japan, Third-World countries, or Europe. Protectionist pressures were always transnational: they were present in Europe, in Japan, in Third-World countries and in the United States. Gilpin himself recognizes the existence, and the regaining force of these pressures inside the United States itself: composed of organized labour and import-sensitive industries and portions of mid-western and eastern sections of the country, a "New Protectionist" alliance is pushing American policies from free-trade to "fair-trade"¹⁰⁹. In this case, it would be irrelevant to argue in terms of "national interest calculations" or "bounded rationality". The dividing line is drawn between social forces, not states. This is also the case in the European Community, long time accused of protectionism. As the case of French farmers pressures reveals, the cleavage between GATT's advocates and adversaries is basically between social forces, not states¹¹⁰. The positions taken by the American and the French states are certainly more meaningful if related to this cleavage between social forces than to the "bounded rationality" theory.

This was clearly the case in the Ozone-protection negotiations. Richard Benedick, the chief American negotiator, has shown to what extent supra-national and infra-national contacts were crucial in the conduct of the negotiations that led to Montreal Protocol in 1987.¹¹¹ The "national"

¹⁰⁹ Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy ..., p. 373.

¹¹⁰ For more details see: Le Monde Diplomatique, December 1993.

¹¹¹ Richard E. Benedick, Ozone Diplomacy: New Directions in Safeguarding the Planet, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1991.

positions in the negotiations were heavily influenced by the positions of the chemical producing companies, by those of certain governmental and non-governmental organization, and by the scientific communities and their reciprocal contacts. The American position in the negotiations, for instance, was defined in accordance with those of the giant chemical producer Du Pont, those of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and of National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA). The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and others. According to Benedick, the European position was defined exclusively in function of the interests of chemical producing companies, who were physically present in the negotiations. The position of Russia towards the agreement was heavily influenced by contacts between American and Russian scientists either in special exchange programmes or in seminars. Much of the Third-World lacked a sufficient scientific knowledge of what was at stake in the negotiations. In the third negotiating round in Geneva (April 1987), the unofficial working group that aimed at formulating a draft agreement included no single Third-World country, in spite of their presence in the official meetings. This "symbolized the South's lack of interest in details of the control measures; Tolba himself (the Egyptian Secretary-General of the UNEP) served, in effect, as representative of the South."¹¹² On the other hand, the American position did not really reflect a "bounded-rational calculation of national interest" as it reflected the struggle of different special interests within the American polity. In the final step of the negotiations, the American position, which favoured a strong agreement to regulate CFCs' production, was about to be reversed by an anti-regulatory "backlash".

¹¹² Richard E. Benedick, Ozone Diplomacy, p. 72.

These anti-regulatory pressures were very strong in certain circles of the American Administration, in the White House, and included some senators, representatives, media, and technocrats in different American agencies. The American chemical industry was, at this point (1987), in favour of strong agreement to reduce the use of CFCs considerably. The reason was that a weak agreement would have penalized the American chemical industry which was already advanced in the research of substitutes for CFCs and had started to implement them against the European industry which was still using the cheaper CFCs. The American position in the negotiations, which defended the conclusion of a strong agreement, was saved, according to Benedick, by long-distance phone calls between the chief American negotiator and persons in the American chemical industry urging them to exercise pressure against the anti-regulatory "backlash".¹¹³ In this complex of actors and interests, searching for the "bounded-rational" calculations of "self-interested-states" seems quite misleading.

As inter-state relations prove to be less relevant to the understanding of international cooperation, it becomes difficult to argue that American leadership is the explanation for the success or the difficulties of this cooperation. The cleavages around the issues of cooperation lie within the states, the United States included, not between them. Henceforth, the supremacy of one of these states does not, as such, entail any consequence regarding the possibility of cooperation. The history of the GATT negotiations supports this conclusion: the protectionist pressures, which confronted the GATT since its initiation, are present in all countries, and especially in the United States. Whether

¹¹³ Richard E. Benedick, Ozone Diplomacy, pp. 51-67.

the latter is leading the world or not seems to be irrelevant to the issue in question. The Coxian conception of "world hegemony" provides important insights into the questions of international cooperation and regulation. It permits to go beyond the inter-state level and to deal with differences and confrontations among social forces and their consequences for states' positions. This is particularly insightful in the case of GATT negotiations where the two groupings of social forces identified by Cox (globalized forces against nationalistic ones) would take opposing positions over the liberalization of trade, and where each side would try to determine the position of the state. The problem with this Coxian conception is its limited explanatory power in other questions where the social forces are ordered differently: in global questions like environment, the distinction between globalized-nationalistic forces is misleading. This is also the case of aid programmes for the CEEC. The categorization made by Cox is too dichotomous and rather economicistic. Its validity relates directly to the question of internationalization of production and proves of little explanatory power outside this area.

Thirdly, international cooperation persisted "after American hegemony". In the three examples in reference, the GATT, environmental cooperation and the aid to CEEC, international cooperation and regulation persisted even after the end of "American hegemony". This persistence constitutes an anomaly in Gilpin's theory, as "economic regimes" are supposed to be too fragile to resist the divergence of interests among

major states.¹¹⁴ The case of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) is a good example: the open opposition of the United States to Rio's convention did not founder the "regime", nor did the divergence of interests between the United States and European countries over ozone protection. Even in the GATT system, the highly mediatized confrontation between the American delegation and the European Commission over agricultural and cultural production did not lead to the end of the system. Even if the Round had failed, this would have not meant necessarily the collapse of the GATT system as a whole. In addition, new forms of cooperation are taking place, such as those concerning aid to the CEEC. The United States and European countries, as well as some others, did create a new institution (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development - EBRD), adapted old ones (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe - CSCE), and put in place an inter-state mechanism (Group of 24) to coordinate their assistance to the CEEC and ex-USSR countries.¹¹⁵ These developments do not seem to fit in the schemes of either Gilpin or Cox: both predict the shrinking of the frameworks of cooperation in place with the decline of the (American) hegemonic order. On the other hand, they seem to confirm Keohane's argument about cooperation "after hegemony". Nevertheless, the examination of these forms of cooperation and regulation demonstrates that their dynamics are far removed from the logic of Keohane's arguments.

¹¹⁴ Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy of..., pp. 351-352.

¹¹⁵ For more details, see: Jeanne Kirk Laux, "Reform, Reintegration and Regional Security", Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, Working paper n° 35 (October 1991).

Keohane emphasizes the role of international institutions in enhancing international cooperation. However, the case of environmental cooperation hardly fits this scheme. The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) played an important role in facilitating the cooperation in the case of ozone protection. Nevertheless, this role was not of much help in the other two sectors of environmental cooperation: that of climate change and of biodiversity. In both cases, political cleavages prevented the conclusion of meaningful and applicable agreements.¹¹⁶ The "technical and institutional services" provided by UNEP are crucial, according to Keohane, to international cooperation- yet they proved to be less important when political and financial issues were at stake. The explanations of environmental cooperation proposed by Keohane et al. categorize countries into "leaders" and "laggards".¹¹⁷ The reality of this cooperation is far more complex. The United States, "leader" in ozone protection, is certainly a "laggard" in climate change process. The opposite is correct for the European countries. Putting the emphasis on the role of international institutions, or on the "bounded-rationality" of states calculations does not help us to understand the contours of such cooperation. The cases of environmental cooperation were also examined by other adherents of regime theory, such as Peter Haas and Oran Young. Peter Haas concludes that the emphasis on institutions hinders the understanding of international cooperation. Instead, he proposes to investigate the

¹¹⁶ For more details see: Genviève Moisan, Les régimes internationaux pour la protection de l'environnement, Thèse de maîtrise, Université d'Ottawa, Ottawa, 1994.

¹¹⁷ Marc Levy, Peter Haas, Robert Keohane, "Institutions for the Earth".

roles played by "epistemic communities" in the conclusion of such "regimes".¹¹⁸ In this approach, Haas shifts the focus from the state calculated behaviour to the internal and transnational influences on states' positions. In this sense, Haas abandons much of Keohane's framework of analysis and resorts, albeit schematically, in behalf of a perception of world order nearer to that of Robert Cox. Oran Young also criticizes the simplistic assumptions of bounded rationality of Keohane's regime theory. In complex negotiation processes, calculations are either impossible or, at best, inaccurate and subject to change constantly. To be able to account for instances of international cooperation, Young presents his concept of "institutional bargaining" that takes into consideration trans-national alliances, the impact of internal pressures and of intellectual leadership¹¹⁹.

Equally, the existence of international institutions does not seem to account for the difficulties of the Uruguay Round, nor for its final conclusion. In both cases, the explanatory factors lie somewhere else. The role of international institutions seem to constitute a part of what is to be explained rather than an explanation. This also applies to the case of aid programmes to the CEEC. When international cooperation was "functioning", international institutions were either created or

¹¹⁸ Peter Haas, "Do regimes matter? epistemic communities and Mediterranean pollution control", in: International Organization, 43, 3, Summer 1989, pp. 377-403.

¹¹⁹ Oran Young, "Political leadership and regime formation: on the development of institutions in international society", in: International Organization, 45, 3, Summer 1991, pp. 281-308, and also: Oran Young, "International regimes: towards a new theory of institutions", in: World Politics, 39, 4, October 1986, pp. 104-122

reactivated to play a role in the scheme of cooperation. Explaining the functioning of this cooperation by its institutions is a confused tautology.

In conclusion, international cooperation seems to be disconnected from the role of American leadership on two different levels: the first is temporal; international cooperation does not necessarily follow the contours of American leadership. It had its difficulties, and its successes, during the period of "American hegemony", and it continues to have both successes and difficulties "after hegemony". The second level concerns the nature of these difficulties and successes: it is evident that the cleavages, and consensus, over issues of international cooperation are identifiable *within states* and not *across-states*. In this sense, inter-state relations and the supremacy of one state over the others is much less relevant to the understanding of international cooperation and regulation than the relations between social forces in each country.

2. A strengthening regulation and a shrinking cooperation

The other major failure of the three theories considered here is their inability to account for the strengthening of international regulation in contrast to weakening cooperation. Examples of the strengthening of international regulation are many and take various forms, ranging from the operations of the International Monetary Fund and the

World Bank everywhere outside the OECD countries, the restructuring of the social and the economic scenery in Central and Eastern Europe in the framework of aid programmes to the CEEC and the ex-USSR, the use of sanctions in Human Rights matters against China or Sudan, the use of explicit force as was the case with Iraq, to the unprecedented use of force to "enforce democracy" as is the case with Haiti. This escalation of international regulation stands in sharp contrast to the difficulties of international cooperation encountered in the much publicized trade negotiations, the biodiversity protection negotiations, the UNCED chart, and others. In fact, not one of the three theories in question (hegemonic stability, international regimes, or structural hegemony) is able to account satisfactorily for this phenomenon.

The rise of international regulation constitutes another anomaly to hegemonic stability theory. The decline in "American hegemony" should have triggered, according to the theory, a net decline in international regulation and the consolidation of the power of certain states to challenge, or at least not to abide by the rules set by this hegemony. In the "bounded rationality" theory's perspective, we should have witnessed a slow, evolutionary strengthening of international regulation through a slow-but-sure intensification of international cooperation as states discover its merits. According to Cox, the end of "Pax Americana" and the consolidation of non-hegemonic world structures would have permitted more liberty to states: different forms of states representing different configurations of social forces would have seen the light and consequently

the rules of "Pax Americana" would have had more chances to be violated, or at least not respected.

Instead, all developments of the 1990s seem to go just in the opposite direction. The basic rules of "American hegemony" did not founder, on the contrary, they have been consolidated. International regulation is strengthening, not through a voluntary and evolutionary build-up of international regimes but in a sudden and radical fashion. The world order built during the "Pax Americana" is solidified: the challenging states have been crushed (Iraq), the non-conforming states isolated and/or sanctioned (Iran, Sudan, Zaire, Haiti), and more states voluntarily adhere to these rules (the case of the CEEC and ex-USSR).

The case of restructuring the social, economic and political scenery of the Central and Eastern European and ex-USSR countries gives a good example of the limits of the three theories to account for international regulation. In this programme, there was a consensus, since the beginning, among all donor countries to restructure the Eastern and Central European economies. "The first emergency programme, known as PHARE or "Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring Economies" was immediately supported by all of the twenty-four member states of the OECD.¹²⁰" This programme involved a senior expert group from the OECD, known as the G-24, as well as the European Commission, the OECD, the IMF, the World Bank, the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Paris Club, and the EBRD. Other

¹²⁰ J.K. Laux, "Reform, Reintegration and Regional Security", p. 7.

institutions are also invited when a relevant issue is discussed¹²¹. This coordinated consensus persisted as the list of "beneficiaries" of the programme expanded. The guiding declared principle of this consensus is that "the aid to the CEEC must be [...] overtly tied to both political and economic change imitative of Western liberal democracies and market economies"¹²². This principle turned in practice to be an instrument of regulating the overall economic, social and political scenery in these zones. This regulatory vocation was institutionalized in the "association agreements" known as "European Agreements". These were signed between the European Commission and representatives of Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia in Brussels on 6 December 1991. The dislocation of the latter initiated new negotiations between the Commission and both the Czech Republic and Slovakia for the conclusion of two new separate Agreements. On 5 February 1993, another Association Agreement was signed with Romania. A similar one was signed with Bulgaria on 8 March 1993. These agreements are:

[...] intended to govern political, economic and commercial relations between the two parties[...] and will provide the framework for [...] (the country in question) with the Community's assistance, to develop its economy, complete its transition towards a market economy, consolidate the process of democratic reform and thus move towards integration into the Community.¹²³

The agreements set out a political dialogue which aims at both the *gradual rapprochement with the Community* and the *increase of security and*

¹²¹ J.K. Laux, "Reform, Reintegration...", p. 7.

¹²² ibid., p. 17.

¹²³ Council of the European Communities, General Secretariat, Press release, Brussels, 5 February 1993, P.4EN (for Romania) and March 1993, p.F.3 (for Bulgaria)

stability throughout Europe. This dialogue is to take place at four levels: summit meetings, ministerial meetings (the Association Council), senior official level (Association Committee) and parliamentary exchange programmes. Trade provisions fix the principles of movement of goods, workers, capital and the establishment and provision of services. The governing principle is to establish gradually *free movement*. A landmark of these agreements is the principle of approximation of laws with that of the Community. This principle is recognized as an important requirement for the gradual integration into the Community, and a number of areas in which approximation should take place in particular are mentioned in the Agreement. The Community also provides technical assistance for such approximation¹²⁴. To overcome the delays implied in the ratification process, Interim Agreements were signed with all six countries to implement them until their official ratification. Restructuring the social, economic and political scenes in the CEEC is a basic objective of the agreements. In spite of the fact that their integration into the Community is mentioned as a final objective, the entire text is centred around the transformation, at a differentiated rhythm, of the socio-economic structures of the CEEC, to be compatible to those of the Community. This was also reiterated by the European summits: in Edinburgh (1992) Association Agreements were declared *"the means by which the*

¹²⁴ Council of European Communities, p. 8EN(Romania), and p.F5(Bulgaria)

*community intends to support and encourage political stability and economic growth in Central and Eastern Europe.*¹²⁵

Association Agreements are but one example of the mechanisms invented by the OECD and the G7 countries to manage the reintegration of these zones into the world economy and into the rules of "Pax Americana": the market economy, free-trade, and democracy. This management includes both technical and financial assistance, restructuring the security architecture, and a lot of political manoeuvres. All are taking place in a relatively smooth and steady manner. The obstacles these efforts meet are by no means comparable to those of international cooperation in trade or in environment.

The aid programmes to the CEEC and to ex-USSR countries do not fit in the three theories in question at least in two points. The first is the relative smoothness of its cooperation component in a post- or non-hegemonic context. The second is the regulatory aspect of its vocation which is equally in contradiction with the non-hegemonic context of the present world order. Regime theory may be more able to describe this form of "cooperation" and incorporate it within its scheme. Still, it cannot *explain why it is happening in this fashion, in that specific time and in this place*. As regime theory takes the state as its unit, and considers its positions exogenously, it is genuinely unable to account for its behaviour. According to the assumptions of regime theory, any coordinated behaviour adopted by the CEEC would have been considered a "regime". This could apply to the COMECON as well as to the attempt to join the EC. In

¹²⁵ Conclusions of the Presidency, European Council, Edinburgh, December 12, 1992, p.7d.

both cases, all that this theory can offer is a good description of the establishment of the cooperation's framework, but it does not explain its formation.

3. International cooperation *à plusieurs vitesses*

The third anomaly of these theories is that international cooperation seems to follow no single pattern, and to respond to no clear tendency. Each case of cooperation seems to constitute a separate process, one that is subject to conjunctural impediments more than anything else. None of the three theories in question can provide an explanation, let alone a predictive instrument, of the contours of different cases of international cooperation.

Both the efficiency of international cooperation frameworks, and the ease of their creation vary enormously from one issue to another. This heterogeneity does not follow a division by sector, i.e. economic versus environmental issues. Some economic frameworks of cooperation, like that of aid to the CEEC certainly were easier to establish and are more efficient in their functioning than cooperation in some environmental issues, such as that of biodiversity or climate change. In addition, international cooperation varies within the same field: in economic affairs, coordinating aid to the CEEC is in clear contrast with the GATT negotiations, and in environmental matters, cooperation in ozone protection worked much easier than in protecting biodiversity, etc.

Keohane suggests two criteria that are supposed to account for this heterogeneity: the first is the existence of international institutions: these institutions, created by "American hegemony", continue to provide states with "public goods" and "technical services" that help them manage their external relations better. Consequently, the areas in which international institutions exist have more chances to witness more efficient cooperation. The second criteria is the degree of density of transactions involved in the issue in question: the more the issues at stake are complex (that is to say they involve transactions of high density and are iterated in time) the more international cooperation becomes likely as it facilitates the work of states in external affairs.¹²⁶

The experience of international cooperation for the protection of the environment does not, however, seem to support Keohane's argument in at least two points. Firstly, the radical difference, both in difficulty to achieve and in its functioning efficiency, between cooperation in the protection of the ozone layer and in the protection of biodiversity cannot be explained by his two criteria. Secondly, the ozone protection negotiations did not follow a steady rhythm of ease (or difficulty): there were "switch points" at which the degree of cooperation was significantly different and which could have altered the final shape this cooperation framework took.

¹²⁶ Robert Keohane, After Hegemony, pp. 85-132.

The difference in the difficulty of creating a framework for cooperation in the protection of the ozone layer and that of the protection of biodiversity is enormous. The Montreal Protocol concluded in September 1987, the cornerstone of this framework of cooperation, was signed only eighteen months after the beginning of international negotiations in this concern¹²⁷. It took only three sessions of negotiations, before Montreal, to create the consensus needed for the conclusion of the Protocol¹²⁸. The idea of the need for an international agreement to protect the ozone layer was released only six years earlier, by the UNEP in 1981. And the whole process of exploring the possibility of such an agreement (including the convening of expert groups, informal meetings etc.), had started only five years before the signing of the Montreal Protocol (in Stockholm in 1982). These negotiations took place exclusively at the level of senior experts and diplomats, and never involved even ministerial meetings. This relative smoothness is in sharp contrast not only with the GATT negotiations, but even with those of other environmental issues¹²⁹. The problem of climate change was on the agenda before that of the ozone layer: already in 1979 an international conference on climate change was held, an international programme was created to foster cooperation in research on climatic change (WCP). An intergovernmental committee on climate change was created in 1988 (IPCC)

¹²⁷ The Vienna Convention was signed in March 1985, see: Richard Benedick, Ozone Diplomacy, preface.

¹²⁸ The first was held in Geneva in December 1986, the second in Vienna in February 1987, and the third in Geneva in April 1987, ibid., pp. 40-50.

¹²⁹ See Mostafa Tolba et al., The world environment: 1972-1992, UNEP, Chapman & Hall, London, 1992, pp. 737-798.

which, in turn, created four working groups on the subject. A second conference was held in 1990 which examined the results of the IPCC's work and decided to create an Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee (INC) with the mission of preparing a framework convention over climate change. It is this INC that would lead to the Rio conference: it started its work in February 1991, and through six rounds of negotiations, it failed to create the consensus needed to sign even as weak convention as that of the initial Rio's convention. In addition, the Rio's Earth Summit and its intensive negotiation efforts failed to convince the United States to sign the prepared convention on biodiversity.¹³⁰

The comparison between these two contrasting examples of international cooperation frameworks shows the fragility of Keohane's criteria. Both of the two "regimes" are constructed with the help of an international institution, the UNEP. In both cases, the UNEP played a pivotal role in bringing the states together and in providing the technical expertise necessary to foster concern about the issue in question and facilitate cooperation. Nevertheless, these efforts were much more fruitful in the case of CFCs (Ozone layer protection) while practically failing in the case of CO2 (protection against climate change). It is evident that the success and failures of both "regimes" were not dependent on the UNEP. The reduction of CFCs was, from the start, a much easier target than the reductions of CO2. The first involved basically the chemical industries, and was rendered feasible by the elaboration of substitutes that could be used commercially. Far from being

¹³⁰ for details of this process, see: Genviève Moisan, Les régimes internationaux, pp. 43-49.

the sole explanation, the positions of chemical producing companies were crucial to the conduct of negotiations. The basic confrontation was between two industrial strategies: that of American-based corporations was to invest in R&D and develop rapidly and before the others a commercially useable substitute (Du Pont), and that of European-based companies which consisted of trying to block any control and to continue to use the cheap CFCs. Once the more expensive substitutes were used in American industries, the latter put all their weight behind a strong agreement on massive reductions of CFCs, otherwise their competitiveness, vis-à-vis the European companies, would have been damaged. The congruence of a group of factors together at the same time made possible the signing of the Montreal Protocol.¹³¹ This was not the case in the CO2 reduction negotiations. First of all, CO2 involves more than one sector of the industry, it involves the whole pattern of development¹³². So, from the beginning, the prospect for massive reduction was bleak. The target which was retained in Rio is to freeze the emission of CO2 at the level of 1990. This is, to use Keohane's terminology, a genuine prisoner dilemma: each actor has more incentives to cheat the others even though full cooperation by all players would be more beneficiary. In spite of the fact that this is an iterated game; there is an international institution fostering cooperation and providing technical expertise; and the transactions involved are a complex of high density, the "international regime" put in place is almost a phantom.

¹³¹ Richard Benedick, Ozone Diplomacy, pp. 40-50.

¹³² Genviève Moisan, Les régimes internationaux, p. 51.

Finally, the two examples show that at no single point in the process of negotiation there was a certainty that the targeted agreement would, or would not, be concluded. The entire process of ozone protection negotiations was, at certain points, about to founder, or to lead to a radically different agreement. For example, the timing of the discovery of the Antarctic Ozone Hole, and the media campaign that followed, did influence the conduct of negotiations, although there proved to be no evidence of a relation between it and emissions of CFCs. If the discovery had been made earlier, and consequently the fact that it was not related to CFCs made known earlier, this effect on the negotiations would have been missing. More importantly, the "antiregulatory backlash" in the American administration was about to alter the American position in the negotiations completely (and indeed, to change the American delegation itself). That would have led inevitably to a much weaker agreement on reductions of CFCs. Also, the changes in the presidency of the European Community, and the consequent departure of the British from the "troika" (the past, the present and the next Foreign Ministers) had a great influence on the position of the Commission in the negotiations. These are but few examples of the factors that influenced the conduct and the conclusion of the Montreal Protocol, and there are many others concerning relations between scientific communities, seminars, non-governmental and governmental organizations and agencies, domestic politics in major negotiating countries, or mediatized events.¹³³ This means, in short, that the fate of international cooperation efforts seem to be much more open-ended, more influenced by conjunctural factors and decisions than by

¹³³ Richard Benedick, Ozone Diplomacy

a general scheme and a general logic central to the theory of "bounded rationality and international regimes". Thus, if there is any "general logic" that explains international cooperation and regulation, it should be looked for somewhere other than in the "bounded-rationality" of "self-interested" states.

In conclusion, the contours of successes and failures of international cooperation and regulation experiences in GATT negotiations, in aid programmes to the CEEC and ex-USSR countries, and in different environmental issues seem to support the first argument of this chapter: that world hegemony in the sense of "American leadership" (Gilpin and Keohane) or that of "structural American hegemony" (Cox) is of limited explanatory power to matters of international cooperation and regulation. The three theories fail to establish a verifiable connection between what they call "world hegemony" and phenomena of cooperation and regulation. Moreover, they fail to account for the specific phenomenon of strengthening international regulation while international cooperation is shrinking. They also fail to provide a satisfactory explanation for the persistence of forms of international cooperation in a "non-hegemonic world order", especially with regards to the heterogeneity of the difficulty of the establishment, and the efficiency of the functioning, of these forms of cooperation. In sum, the three theories in question, and in fact the entire debate over "American hegemony", present a too simplistic view of both international cooperation and international regulation. The next section identifies the origins of the limits of these prevailing conceptions of world hegemony.

C. THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE LIMITED EXPLANATORY POWER OF THE CURRENT "WORLD HEGEMONY"'S CONCEPTIONS

The theoretical premises underpinning the current connotations of "world hegemony" are responsible for their explanatory weaknesses. The actor-centred connotation is unfit, by definition, to account for issues beyond interstate relations. Consequently, it cannot provide genuine explanations for world politics. As for the structuralist connotation, in spite of its potential, its universalistic bias, its level of analysis, and its negligence of actors, all prevent it from providing a better explanations for the said issues.

1. The limits of the actor-centred connotation

Two basic characteristics of this connotation undermine its explanatory power: its interstate level of analysis, and its concentration on actors. The first chapter shows how this connotation is strictly state-centered, where "world hegemony" is perceived as an interstate relation. Consequently, it can not, by definition, account for relations that extend beyond the interstate system, as those involved in ideological change, in supranational transactions, in social consequences of global economic crisis, etc. Yet, all these issues prove to be vital to the understanding of international cooperation and regulation. That is how Peter Haas resorts to "epistemic communities" to account for environmental "regimes"

and Oran Young resorts to factors extending beyond interstate relations. That is also why Gilpin abandons his own interstate conception of "world hegemony" in behalf of a more inclusive connotation when he tackles the questions of international cooperation. The "hegemonic stability theory" is based on the link between changes in the position of "American hegemony" and the "functioning" of the "international system". However, the analysis Gilpin presents of the post-war world economy is based, more or less implicitly, on a different concept: that of the "international political framework". A concept that is much nearer to the structural conception of "world hegemony".¹³⁴ As mentioned earlier, Gilpin attributes the current difficulties of international cooperation to the collapse of the "political framework" upon which the postwar order rested. This "political framework" was composed of a liberal hegemonic power, a set of common interests shared by major states, and a prevalent liberal ideology. This concept goes beyond the interstate level to examine complex social relations such as the interest groups behind protectionism. According to Gilpin, the decline in American hegemony in itself does not necessarily entail the undermining of this framework, rather, it is the simultaneous decline of "American hegemony", divergence of interests among the major states, and the mounting of "New Protectionism". In his analysis of the latter, Gilpin looks directly into "domestic" affairs to find his explanations¹³⁵. Clearly, the notion of "political framework" is not without resonance with that of Coxian "hegemonic world order". Both include a central state at the defence of the order, an ideological

¹³⁴ See chapter I, p. 8-9.

¹³⁵ Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy, pp. 364-379.

commitment and a convergence of interests. Here, Gilpin follows a logical sequence in his analysis: in choosing the actor-centred connotation, he looks for the meaning of states' behaviour and its determinants. This leads him to go beyond the actor-centred connotation and to resort to the concept of "political framework"- a concept that goes beyond the interstate level of analysis.

Keohane, on the contrary, remains at the interstate level of analysis. That is one reason why his concept of "international regime" is unable to go beyond the description of international cooperation and to provide an explanation of its contours¹³⁶. The interstate level of analysis is organically linked to the classical dilemma of the Realist hypothesis of "national interest", and is reproduced, in a more complex fashion, in Keohane's analysis under the name of "bounded rationality". The real problem is not to know whether state representatives are rational or not, it is in the lack of a theory of the state. Keohane, as well as most of subscribers to the state-centered level of analysis, takes the state as a given, unproblematized, and undivided. He has no explicit position on how state's decisions are made, by who, and for whose interests. Moreover, he overlooks basic divisions within states. The consequence is that state's interests are considered exogenously and, most importantly, *a posteriori*. Keohane himself acknowledges this weakness and attributes to it the inability of Realist theories to predict state

¹³⁶ Helen Milner, "International theories of cooperation among nations", in: World Politics, 44, 2, April 1992, pp. 466-496.

behaviour.¹³⁷ Bounded rationality theory is not interested in "domestic politics", in social forces, or in "internal" calculations of cost-benefits. Accordingly, it cannot tell what will be the position of a France, a United States or a Senegal. Nor can it explain why this state adopts such a position. As this theory depends on a broad definition of rationality, and as it refuses to go beyond the state level, all it can do is to qualify any adopted position (by a state) as rational. Not only is this an empty judgement, but more importantly, it does not help us to understand this position or to predict its evolution. Consequently, "international regimes", the ultimate act of states' bounded rationality, can neither be predicted nor explained. At best, they can be described when they exist.

The second problem with this connotation is its concentration on actor's attributes and precisely on the power dimension. Thus, "world hegemony" is reduced to being a supremacy in an actor's power capabilities. Therefore, the actor-centred connotation becomes of little help when it comes to changes in the structures of world order. Both Gilpin and Keohane have resolved this problem simply by dropping their concept of "world hegemony" with its actor-centred connotation, and using two other concepts that are more sensitive to structural change. This is the case with Gilpin's "political framework". It includes a basic structural element: the convergence of interests among major states. In

¹³⁷ Robert Keohane, "Institutional theory and the realist challenge after the Cold War", in David Baldwin, ed., Neoliberalism and Neorealism, New York, Columbia University Press, 1993, pp. 270-300.

practice. Gilpin finds his explanations of the collapse of this "political framework" in three elements: "American hegemony"; changes in supply conditions; and limitations on demand management¹³⁸. Thus, the explanatory factor ceases to be "American hegemony" and its power supremacy over other states in the system, as the "hegemonic stability theory" foresees, it becomes one of structural changes that occur beyond the actors' decisions.

This shift towards more structural explanations underlies Keohane's concept of "international regimes". Keohane adopts the collective definition of the latter, presented by Krasner as:

sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations. Principles are beliefs of facts, causation, and rectitude. Norms are standards of behaviour defined in terms of rights and obligations. Rules are specific prescriptions or proscriptions for action. Decision-making procedures are prevailing practices for making and implementing collective choice¹³⁹

Keohane use this definition (which describes the "structures" of world order more than states' actions) to overcome the narrowness of his own conception of world hegemony. This need to focus on structures explains, in part, the fact that Keohane is less interested in "American hegemony" than in the "international regimes" it established. Indeed, his definition of "international regimes" describes "hegemonic structures" more than anything else. It surely does not describe a process of building consensus or attempts to construct frameworks of international cooperation as the term may suggest. Implicit and explicit principles, norms, as well as

¹³⁸ Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy ..., pp. 352-360.

¹³⁹ Robert Keohane, After Hegemony, p. 57.

decision-making procedures. belong to Cox's definition of structural hegemony. This means that, in the final analysis, Keohane finds more interesting, as an explanatory factor, the structural notion of hegemony than its actor-centred connotation.

In both cases, Gilpin and Keohane abandon the state-level actor-centred connotation of "world hegemony" in their analysis of the world order. Realizing the limits of this connotation to account for questions of international cooperation and international regulation, both authors resort to other concepts as explanatory factors. These other concepts echo the structural notion of "world hegemony", albeit in different degrees. The concept of "political framework" goes beyond both state-level and the focus on actors' characteristics. That is why it is more capable of providing the needed explanations than that of awkward "American hegemony" or even that of "international regime". In this perspective, the term "world hegemony", in its actor-centred connotation, is used rather in a metaphoric fashion: states are regarded as individuals living in an imaginary society (of states). The underlying hypothesis is that states will act as individuals do in society, i.e. as rational, egoist, autonomous, and power-seeking units. This hypothesis proves to be an obstacle to the understanding of inter-state relations themselves, let alone world politics issues.

2. The limits of the Coxian structuralist connotation

The structuralist connotation, as presented by Cox, poses certain problems. I will discuss here only those which undermine its explanatory power in international cooperation and international regulation affairs. In this regard, three basic problems can be identified: the reductionist syndrome of the connotation, its universalistic bias, and its international character.

Cox presents "historic structures" as a multiplicity of social, economic and political structures, while, in his application, he is interested almost exclusively in production and precisely in the internationalization of production. The result is two-fold: first is the classical economic syndrome of reducing the complexity of social relations to those of production, while it is clear, using his own theoretical framework, that production itself is usually subjected to political and social impediments. The second is that Cox makes the position vis-à-vis the internationalization of production the only defining variable of social forces. Of course, when it comes to more complex phenomena that involve other than production-based distinctions, this categorization not only loses its meaning, but also becomes an obstacle to understanding. This is the case with both coordinated aid programmes to the East and environmental protection. In both cases, the forces behind (and against) these forms of international cooperation and regulation could not be identified by his simplistic lines drawn around globalized production. Even in the specific case of the GATT negotiations

which his theoretical framework seems to explain better than the two others, it is hard to identify what Cox calls "national capital" and "national capitalists", especially in Third-World countries where it is dubious that such a category can be identified and distinguished from internationalized capital.

The second major problem with Cox's connotation is its universalistic bias. Cox analyzes specific historic structures, those of the West. Then, he generalizes his conclusions on the "world historic structures" as if all economic, social and political structures world-wide *already* constitute a sole historic structure. In addition, this universalistic bias obscures the basic difference between structures in the West and their "counterparts" elsewhere. This is especially misleading in the case of the nation-state: using this scale as the meaningful unit of social interaction is clearly a dubious generalization: not only in a globalizing era but all across history. In large areas of the world, this proves to be false. The very practical consequence of this universalistic bias is to treat the interstate system as a homogenous structure. Consequently, Cox's predictions concerning cooperation are presented as if they concern all interstate transactions, regulation included. Just like the Realists, he fails to grasp the genuine difference between international regulation and international cooperation, and thus fails to account for the strengthening of the first and the weakening of the second.

Finally, in spite of Cox's three-level theoretical framework (social forces, states, and world orders), in his analysis of the history of

modern world order¹⁴⁰, he reintroduces the "national" level of analysis as the *sole* meaningful unit.¹⁴¹ Unlike the Realists, Cox does not reduce the national level to that of inter-state relations as he does emphasize the role of social forces. Still, he gives little attention to *the global scale*. Speaking of "world hegemony", Cox does not interpret it as a social phenomenon that is taking place on a world scale, but as a national project carried out and universalized by a nation-state. Thus, "world hegemony" is not, let us say, a consensus over norms, rules and values that is built *among certain social forces world-wide*, it is a *project* carried out by *conquering nations* and imposed on *other nations*. Here, Cox adheres to the *inter-national* level of analysis at the expense of the examination of "global changes". Moreover, in the process of "internationalization" of a "national hegemony", the emphasis is put much more on structures than on actors. In Cox's major book, very little mention of actors is done.¹⁴² This seems to be a consequence of the economistic view of social relations and the determinant role given *de facto* to production. As far as explanatory power is concerned, this bias prevents the Coxian conception of "world hegemony" from accounting for the differences in the forms of behaviour that take place within the same structure. This is the case of the emergence of certain frameworks of cooperation while other forms are aborted within the same "non-hegemonic"

¹⁴⁰ Robert Cox, Production, Power and World Orders.

¹⁴¹ By the "national" level, I refer to that of the nation-state.

¹⁴² ibid.

historical structure. An approach more attentive to actors' strategies might be in a better position to grasp such variations.

D. CONCLUSION

This chapter has argued that the present conceptions of "world hegemony" fail to account satisfactorily for international cooperation and international regulation, and to go beyond mere description and to provide *explanations* for these phenomena. Three major theories of international cooperation use the concept in question: the "hegemonic stability theory", the theory of "international regimes" and the theory of "structural hegemony". All have serious limitations to their capacities of explaining instances of international cooperation and regulation. The GATT system, the environment protection efforts, and the coordinated aid to Central & Eastern European Countries and the ex-USSR were referred to as examples of international cooperation and regulation. I have identified three areas in which the said theories reached their limits: the connection between "American hegemony" (or "Pax Americana") and cooperation & regulation, the simultaneous strengthening of international regulation and shrinking of international cooperation, and the heterogeneity of the difficulty in the establishment (and the efficiency of the functioning) of international cooperation frameworks.

Furthermore, this chapter claims that these limits are to be attributed to the theoretical foundations of the used connotation of world hegemony. It has identified, in the case of actor-centred connotation, two major origins of these limits: the first is the concentration on the actor that puts structural changes out of reach, and the second is the uncritical adherence to the inter-state level of analysis. This prevents the said concept from taking social relations into account and hence cuts the concept from the source of explanatory power. In the case of the structuralist connotation, there are three major problems: the first is its economistic character, which makes the concept of little help in issues that are not directly related to the "internationalization of production". The second is its universalistic bias that prevents the concept from taking into account the major differences between cooperation and regulation, and the third is its inter-national level of analysis that hinders it from accounting for issues involving global change.

Therefore, any attempt to improve the explanatory power of the concept of "world hegemony" should start by redefining its connotation in order to avoid the above mentioned problems. This will be the objective of the third chapter.

CHAPTER III: ANALYTICAL AND THEORETICAL PROPOSITIONS : THE
CONSTRUCTION OF A WORLD HEGEMONY

The objective of this chapter is to propose a clearer and more useful definition of the concept of "world hegemony" than that presented by the three prevailing theories of international politics. The validity of this proposition should be verified according to two criteria. The first is the clarity, the exactitude, and *internal coherence* of the used connotation. By this, I mean its distinctiveness from other connotations and the absence of theoretical and logical confusion. This does not necessarily entail any *instrumental* validity: as such, the said concept might prove to be of no explanatory power and be excluded, at a later stage, on these grounds. If this is to be the case, it would only mean that "world hegemony" is a useless concept in understanding world politics issues, but it would not mean that the concept is theoretically erroneous, or confused. This is the basic difference between the proposed connotation and the present ones: the currently used connotations are based on theoretical confusion, which undermine their explanatory power. Hence, the first section will propose a connotation derived from the gramscian notion of hegemony and applied to world politics. This notion differs from the prevalent conception in the distinction it makes between hegemony and domination, in its emphasis on the embeddedness of hegemony in social relations, and in its use of a global level of analysis. This re-conceptualisation, I argue, avoids the confusion of the current connotations.

The second criterion is the instrumental validity of the proposed denotation of the concept. A denotation, to use W. E. Connolly's terms, refers to "real-world objects to which the concept applies". In this perspective, the second section will argue that historically, there has been no single world hegemony. Instead, there is a process of constructing a world-hegemony around the norms, values and principles underpinning modernity. This includes the universalization of market as a form of economy, of the modern state as the form of politics, of individualism as a founding principle of the social, and of disenchantment as a base of ideology. This denotation is presented here as a group of "working hypotheses". Its validity depends on its explanatory power and on further investigation. For this reason the third section will use these "working hypotheses" to revisit the questions of international cooperation and regulation that chapter two has tackled. However, this does not constitute a full verification of the proposition, such a verification would necessitate more detailed case-studies that surpass the objectives of this thesis. Accordingly, the reference made in this section to cases of international cooperation and regulation should be considered only as a suggestive test, not as a full verification. Finally, the distinction between the theoretical proposition (the connotation of "world hegemony") and the analytical proposition (the denotation) should be maintained. As they should be evaluated by two separate epistemological processes, there is no automatic link between the fate of each. The denotation, normally, can be more open to modifications as it deals with historical data and therefore depends more on the interpretations given to it.

A. REDEFINING THE CONNOTATION OF "WORLD HEGEMONY": A THEORETICAL PROPOSITION

Gramsci's writings on hegemony constitute a fertile source for understanding hegemonic phenomena in international politics. This source inspired much of the current critical writings on the subject. However, it seems that a revisit of Gramsci's original notions is still useful.

1. Gramsci and hegemony-related concepts

The *raison d'être* of the hegemony concept is its distinctiveness from concepts such as supremacy or domination. Otherwise, it would be quite futile to duplicate the concept of domination by using another term. Thus, both Realist and Marxian connotations that equate hegemony with domination are, at best, unnecessarily confusing. This is the case with the connotation given to "world hegemony" by Gilpin, Wallerstein or Arrighi¹⁴³. Whether they are analyzing issues of international relations or of "domestic" politics, it seems more exact in their case to eliminate the term hegemony and to argue explicitly in terms of supremacy and domination. The only reason why the term hegemony becomes of any use is when it implies something more (or less) than domination. In this sense, the Gramscian connotation of hegemony, as well as some Realist

¹⁴³ See chapter I, pp. 14-16.

connotations (like that of Kindleberger and, to some extent, Keohane)¹⁴⁴, acquires its full significance and importance.

The distinction between hegemony and domination goes back to Marxist thought prior to Gramsci, especially in the distinction between the dictatorship of the proletariat against its enemy classes and its hegemony over its allies. This distinction was already current in the Third International, although its application was limited. Gramsci picked up the idea and applied it to the relation between the Bourgeoisie and the proletariat in Western democracies¹⁴⁵. Hegemony includes more than domination: it incorporates the dominated classes within its structures. This incorporation, according to Gramsci, is made through the universal character it gives to its rules, values and norms, and through certain concessions by the bourgeoisie that permit the dominated to identify themselves in the hegemonic order¹⁴⁶. Thus, the incorporative element of hegemony includes two facets: the first is "real", i.e. based on the reduction of domination by presenting real concessions to the proletariat. And the other is "false", based on the propagation of "hegemonic ideology" that presents the hegemonic order as normal, neutral, and universal.

¹⁴⁴ ibid., pp. 3-13

¹⁴⁵ Robert Cox, "Gramsci: Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method", Millennium, vol. 12, n° 2, p. 163.

¹⁴⁶ For more details, see: Robert Ricci et al., ed., Gramsci dans le texte, Paris, Editions sociales, 1975, Perry Anderson, Sur Gramsci, Maspero, Paris, 1978, Thomas R. Bates, "Gramsci and the theory of hegemony", Journal of the History of Ideas, vol. XXXVI, n° 2, April-June 1975, pp. 351-366, and Chantal Mouffe, "Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci", in: Gramsci and Marxist Theory, Routledge, London, 1979, pp. 168-204.

Therefore, as the first facet attenuates the domination, the second consolidates and perpetuates it through the camouflage of its nature. Both facets are assumed by many societal institutions as well as by those of the state: education, the media, the Church, intellectuals, etc. In this Gramscian sense, hegemony is based on a relation of domination (or a structure of domination, depending on the theoretical position adopted), but it cannot be reduced to it. It includes coercion, but the latter is implicit: it is not used unless there is a major challenge to the hegemonic order, a case that would constitute a failure of hegemony. Hegemony substitutes the need for the use of coercion as it renders domination more acceptable and less apparent. If coercion is the rule of domination, incorporation is the rule of hegemony.

In this perspective, I argue, hegemony can only be perceived in social relations (or structures), not as a characteristic of actors. The fact that an actor, a social class for example, has supremacy in power resources, or occupies a dominant position in the economy, is not an indication that there is (or not) hegemony in the society in question. A social class might be dominant but not hegemonic, in the case that it depends on oppression and coercion to maintain its dominance. On the other hand, even if an actor is hegemonic, that does not mean in any case that this actor is the hegemony itself, it only means that it is exercising hegemony. In this sense, hegemony is a state of social relations (or structures), not actors. Hegemony, as a noun, describes a certain configuration of social relations (or structures). Therefore, one can speak of hegemonic culture, ideology, or in sum, hegemonic social

relations (or structures). Saying that a certain class has its hegemony in a certain society only means that it has rendered a suitable (from its point of view) configuration of social relations hegemonic in this society. Hegemony, therefore, is a concept that describes a relation of mixed domination and incorporation, without having any immediate and concrete content. It is vital to keep this abstract nature of the concept in mind to avoid its reification in historical (or concrete) analysis.

The importance of this insistence on the abstract character of the concept of hegemony, and on the fact that it describes a set of social relations (or structures), is two-fold. On the one hand, it leads to "reembedding hegemony back in" the analysis. Instead of regarding it as a "cloud" that covers the whole society, one that structures all phenomena in question, this perception calls for a more analytical approach to hegemony: analyzing how it is built, its mechanisms, its crises and its erosion. This perception also reaffirms the analytical importance of the social forces involved in the hegemony construction-erosion. Hegemony does not, in this perspective, float somewhere in the atmosphere, it is *made and reproduced, consolidated and threatened*, by social forces (or actors in general). Accordingly, studying hegemony implies the apprehension of both actors and structures. Hegemonic ideology is *produced* by specific actors (organic intellectuals). Thus, in harmony with Gramsci's analysis, every hegemony has a social force (or a class) at its defence, and it is defined in relation to the social forces, groups or classes in a specific time and space.

On the other hand, keeping in mind the abstract character of the concept of hegemony helps to regard any given "hegemony" as incomplete. The concept of hegemony is more an "ideal-type" than anything else. It has to be redefined in time and in space whenever it is used to describe a certain configuration of social relations. These cases are more or less near to the ideal-type, but are never identical to it. As hegemony is embedded in social relations, any analysis of its contours should seek to grasp the dynamics of its construction-erosion. As it includes both domination and incorporation, hegemony is constantly redefined by compromises and tensions among social forces. It is constantly perpetuated by its mechanisms and threatened by its challengers and victims. Keeping in mind the distance between the concept and social realities helps to resist the temptation of reification and to anchor hegemony more strongly in social relations and social forces.

It is only through this perspective that the other Gramscian hegemony-related concepts can be intelligible. Among the concepts presented by Gramsci in this context, three are particularly useful to our subject: the historic bloc, Passive Revolution, and Caesarism. I will tackle them in order.

The Historic Bloc is the key concept in Gramsci's political theory, although it received little attention in the current literature featuring Gramsci¹⁴⁷. When it is used, this concept is often subject to ambiguities and/or confusions: either identified with the structures (in the Marxian

¹⁴⁷ One of the rare analyses made of the concept is found in: Hugues Portelli, Gramsci et le bloc historique, Paris, P.U.F., 1972, especially pp. 47-67 and 97-124.

notion) or with hegemony itself. Robert Cox has used this concept in most of his writings without presenting a clear-cut definition of its connotation¹⁴⁸. According to Gramsci, "the structures and superstructures constitute a historic bloc"¹⁴⁹. Gramsci includes in this bloc both the "material forces" of production and the ideology¹⁵⁰. It also includes both the political society (the state apparatus) and the civil society.¹⁵¹ The existence of a homogenous and consensual historic bloc is a prerequisite for the moment of hegemony¹⁵². In other words, the historic bloc, in Gramsci's view, would include four elements: social relations of production, political organization, societal organization, and ideology. These four structures (or sets of social relations) are the bases of any hegemony. Consequently, the existence of a homogenous historic bloc is a condition *sine qua non* for the construction of hegemony. In a given social formation, there can be no more than one hegemony, otherwise, by definition, it is not *hegemonic*. If there is more than one historic bloc, or one that is not homogenous, i.e. not completely dominant, there will be more than one hegemonic project. Thus, both hegemony and a homogenous and

¹⁴⁸ In "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations", Cox had tackled this concept more than anywhere else in his writings, yet, no definition of the Historic Bloc is presented in this article.

¹⁴⁹ Robert Ricci et al., Gramsci dans le texte, p. 193 (personal translation).

¹⁵⁰ Robert Ricci et al., Gramsci dans le texte, p. 208.

¹⁵¹ H. Portelli, Gramsci et le bloc historique, p. 13.

¹⁵² Robert Ricci et al., op.cit., p. 482.

dominant historic bloc are organically linked. This statement is almost tautological and needs no more emphasis.

The other concept that is closely related to hegemony is that of Passive Revolution. This concept refers to a state of transition, of transformation led by a ruling group without the participation of masses. Passive revolution appears as a form of social relations when there is no one dominant historic bloc: the ruling group tries to universalize its own historic bloc without being able to dismantle the other(s)¹⁵³. A revolution

is passive when the state is replaced by a ruling class, when the aspect of *domination* (coercion) predominates over that of *leadership* (hegemony as organised consent)¹⁵⁴.

This "revolution" is thus caught in a logic of revolution-restoration as it is subjugated to the conflict between the competing historic blocs. In this sense, a passive revolution is an attempt to transform the historic bloc in a way that permits the construction of a hegemony. As this transformation is *planned*, and as it involves dislocations, it includes a frequent use of overt force. That is why coercion is much more present than incorporation in a passive revolution. In addition, as the passive revolution is primarily an intended project, it raises the question of leadership, and that is where the third concept intervenes.

¹⁵³ R. Cox, "Gramsci, ...", pp. 165-167.

¹⁵⁴ Christine Buci-Glucksmann, "State, transition and passive revolution", in: Chantal Mouffe, Gramsci and Marxist Theory, p. 217. (Italics in text)

Caesarism is the leadership of a passive revolution when, in Gramsci's analysis, "a strong man intervenes to resolve the stalemate between equal and opposed social forces."¹⁵⁵ This phenomenon is current in societies that witnessed this form of social relations. Gramsci referred, among other examples, to Napoleon I as a case of passive revolution where the conflict between two historic blocs gave a chance to a leader to enlarge his authority and to introduce wide-range changes in the society at large. Accordingly, Caesarism is a leadership of the passive revolution backed by a coalition of social forces (or groups) that support the historic bloc at the base of this "revolution".

These three concepts are of particular interest to any coherent conceptualization of "world hegemony". All in maintaining the distinction between hegemony and domination, the concept of passive revolution helps to identify certain ways of making the "passage from domination to hegemony". The concept of Caesarism helps in understanding the phenomena of leadership of the passive revolution. Of course, the concept of historic bloc constitutes a major criteria in distinguishing hegemonic social sets of relations from others.

2. The concept of "World hegemony"

Keeping in mind the distinction between hegemony and domination on the one hand, and its genus as a description of certain types of social

¹⁵⁵ R. Cox, "Gramsci...", p. 166.

relations on the other. I will now attempt to extend this concept to world politics.

The basic difference between the concept of hegemony and that of "world hegemony" concerns the level of analysis, not the connotation of hegemony itself. Neither the genus nor the distinctiveness of the concept of hegemony should be affected. Otherwise, it would be more exact to find another term to describe the desired different connotation. World hegemony, in this perspective, would simply be defined as a hegemony on a global (world) scale. This definition, in reference to the above discussion, has three implications: 1) world hegemony describes a certain configuration of social relations that are taking place on a world scale; 2) world hegemony is based on a dominant global historic bloc; 3) world hegemony is constructed and maintained by social forces existing and acting on a world scale.

First, world hegemony, as a concept, should be describing a configuration of social relations taking place on a global scale and characterized by the existence of a general consensus over values, norms, and rules, which are presented as neutral, normal and universal, while they mask a state of domination that characterizes these social relations. This consensus is built through a mix of power and incorporation. Thus, dominant groups present certain concessions to the dominated to assure their incorporation in the hegemonic order. The socialization institutions use these concessions to affirm the inclusiveness nature of the hegemonic order and its responsiveness to the demands of all groups of the unit in question. The power element is latent and used only in exceptional cases:

where the hegemonic culture fails to assure conformity. In this perspective, the more the authorities resort to the use of force, the less hegemony is established.

Claiming that there is a world hegemony implies, secondly, that there is a global, homogenous, and dominant historic bloc. If one recalls Gramsci's definition, this would include a form of economy, an organization of politics, a societal organization, and an ideology. A form of economy means a certain way of organizing production, reproduction and distribution of its charges and benefits as well as a perception of the place of economy in relation to other societal spheres. An organization of politics refers to governance conditions and modalities as well as those of socialization mechanisms: this does not mean necessarily the state, the latter is only a form of political organization among other possibilities (such as empires, Califat, Chieffry, Cities, Anarchy, etc.). In the case of the state, the organization of politics does not correspond perfectly to state apparatus, it includes also the governing rules over education, media, regulation, etc. Societal organization refers to the ways in which individuals are ordered in a given society. This might apply to class structures, voluntary associations, tribes, families, etc. The fourth component is that of ideology: it refers to the basic principles that order the image individuals make of their existence. In this sense, ideology (as a part of historic bloc) is not the specific image or creed people have (such as Liberalism or Socialism), it is the underlying principles that they use to interpret the world and life itself. In other words, it is the meta-ideology of a given society.

Finally, claiming that there is a world hegemony implies the existence of social forces that are distributed on a world scale. This means, hypothetically, that social forces are only meaningful if considered on a world scale and not along national lines. The way in which social forces are ordered does not correspond, in this case, to that of nations, communities or any other infra-global level. Still, social forces can be identifiable on many different lines, i.e. in relation to gender, production, ideology, wealth, age, urban-rural areas, etc. But the *only* scale on which these forces are ordered should be that of the world as a unit. In a much simplified example, the meaningful category of textile workers should not be, in this case, the French, the Canadian, or the Brazilian textile workers, it is the textile workers all over the world. This does not necessarily mean a disappearance of *any differences* between Brazilian and French textile workers, it means the existence of commonalities that justify the use of term textile workers as a meaningful category to address "their" issues on a global scale. It is only if the world constitutes the meaningful ordering scale of social forces that we can speak in terms of a world historic bloc or of a world hegemony.

The relation between these three elements (world hegemony, homogenous and dominant historic bloc, and globally-ordered social forces) is logical. No one of the three can exist, by definition, without the two others: a hegemony is based on a (single and homogenous) historic bloc, otherwise it would be a non-hegemonic order or at best, a passive revolution. If one historic bloc is dominant on a world scale that means that the ordering scale of social forces is also global as the historic bloc, by its definition, is organically related to the emergence and

consolidation of social forces. Hegemony is supposed to cover a structure (or set of relations) of domination. this implies that the same scale is used to measure both the state of domination and its related configuration of social forces. etc.

In this perspective, the current connotations of "world hegemony" can be classified in two categories. The first, as mentioned before, is that of metaphors. This is the power-based and actor-centred connotation used mainly by Realist tradition scholars. It includes a two-fold metaphor as states are perceived as if they: 1) constitute *units*, intelligible as such, and having their "own" "interests" and "rationality"; 2) enter into complex sets of relations similar to those found in societies (composed of individuals or groups). These underpinnings seem far from being useful in understanding world politics. As the examples we have given from international cooperation and regulation show, these assumptions actually hinder the understanding of global political issues.

This metaphoric use also confounds hegemony with domination in most cases. When a distinction is made between the two, as is the case with Kindleberger or Keohane, hegemony is perceived as an immediate and almost inevitable consequence of the second. Therefore, all the analytical potential of the concept of hegemony is dissipated: in addition to its conceptual confusion, this connotation does not investigate the logic, the dynamics, the mechanisms and the actors involved in the construction of hegemony. Instead, as this connotation is confounded with that of domination and/or power capabilities, hegemony loses its use as a distinct

concept: it can no longer account for phenomena, but only be accounted for by other concepts and phenomena.

The second current connotation of "world hegemony" is ambivalent. It includes two connotations: the first is "inter-national", according to which it is perceived as a globalized "national hegemony".¹⁵⁶ Thus, it is not a process that is taking place on the world scale, it is a project carried out by certain nations and diffused *in the world*. Its objective is its complete globalization, i.e. a complete success of the nation-based project. The ambivalence of this conception is that it includes two separate connotations that are presented under the same title. On the one hand, there is a hegemony that departs from a territorial base and attempts to penetrate other territories in order to shape them in its image. This connotation is more of a "hegemony-among-nations" than of a "world hegemony". On the other hand, there is a connotation of global hegemony, which is a possible scenario of the present transformations in world order. This is actually what Cox and others propose as a possible coming hegemony: a transnational American-led hegemonic order¹⁵⁷. This "world hegemony" would depend, in Coxian terms, on social forces that are acting on a global scale and favorizing a global historic bloc. The problem with this ambivalent connotation is that scholars using it move easily from one meaning to the other without establishing intelligible

¹⁵⁶ Robert W.Cox, Production, Power and World Orders, New York, Columbia University Press, 1987, p. 266.

¹⁵⁷ See: Robert W.Cox, Production, Power,..., pp. 355-398, and Stephen Gill, American Hegemony and Trilateral Commission. New York, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 89-121.

distinction between the two. Thus, in their analysis of the "hegemonic world orders" prior to the anticipated "transnational American-led hegemony", these scholars use a framework of analysis that goes far beyond the nation scale. For example, the coming and the end of Pax Britannica involves (in Cox's analysis) changes in economy, in social forces and in forms of states all over the world. In this case, the connotation of a hegemony-among nations disappears in favour of the other one. It re-emerges only to account for the role of Great Britain in this order. So, both connotations are used: the global one to account for the "hegemonic world order", and the other to account for the role of the leading state.

In fact, this is not a coincidence. The first connotation, the "hegemony-among-nations" recalls the Realist connotation. The basic difference is that the category state is replaced by that of nation. The basic difference that distinguishes between them is that "hegemony-among-nations" gives considerable attention to social forces and thus escapes the narrowness and hollowness of the state-as-unit approach of the Realist connotation. Nevertheless, it remains prisoner of the nation as the unit of analysis. The inadequacy of this scale pushes all adherents of this connotation to move to the other connotation, that of world hegemony as a global enterprise.

In sum, three connotations of "world hegemony" can be distinguished: the first considers it as an "interstate-leadership", the second considers it as a "hegemony-among-nations", and the third is that of hegemony as a global consensus-building. The first connotation is a complex of confusing

metaphors. The second is too ambiguous and whenever it is useful, it is when it adopts the third connotation. Thus, only the third presents a distinctive, coherent and logical connotation to the concept of "world hegemony" .

B. THE DENOTATION OF "WORLD HEGEMONY": AN ANALYTICAL PROPOSITION

This section specifies the denotation of the proposed connotation of world hegemony. The argument of this section is that there is no "real-world" historical experience that can be called a world hegemony, and that the concept of passive revolution accounts better for world politics. Therefore, I will examine in more detail the denotation of the latter concept.

1. Roman, Islamic, Hispanic, British, or American "hegemony" ?

The question of historical instances of the concept of "world hegemony" is, as stated before, wide open:

There is unanimous agreement that the post-1945 period has been one of U.S. hegemony.[...], there is a wide agreement that nineteenth-century Great Britain also qualifies.[...] [S]eventeenth-century Netherlands is excluded[...] Modelski identifies sixteenth-century Portugal and eighteenth-century Britain as instances of world leadership.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ David Rapkin, World Leadership and Hegemony. Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990, pp. 8-9.

Following Paul Kennedy's "bids for Mastery", one can add to the list both the Islamic Empire and the Habsburgs.¹⁵⁹ Applying similar criteria, there is no evident reason why the Mogol or Roman Empires should be excluded.

In light of the proposed connotation of world hegemony, not a single one of these world orders can qualify. Scholars belonging to different approaches agree that world orders previous to the modern era were characterized by diversity of historical blocs rather than by homogeneity.¹⁶⁰ Economy has been perceived in different manners, organized according to different principles and subjected to various rules of burden-sharing and benefits-distributing. Even in the so-called "Pax Americana", other modes of economy are prevalent in different zones of the world. Market-economy, in spite of its spectacular expansion since the sixteenth-century, is not the only existing form of economy. Other forms of economy are still present: not only in african countries or amazonian bushes, but also in the midst of the market-economy societies: in the informal sector and familial production. This diversity of pre-modern historical blocs is equally found in the case of political and societal organizations and in ideology.

¹⁵⁹ Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers, New York, Random House, 1989.

¹⁶⁰ For example, see: Immanuel Wallerstein, The modern World-System, New York, Academic Press, 1974, Fernand Braudel, La dynamique du capitalisme, Paris, Arthaud, 1985, Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall..., Anthony Giddens, Violence and Nation-State, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1987, Marcel Mauss, Sociologie et anthropologie, Paris, PUF, 1991 [1950].

In addition, coercion seems to play a much more important role than that of incorporation in maintaining these world orders. Kennedy's analysis about the rise and fall of great powers is indicative in this regard. This is also true in the case of "Pax Americana", where the use of force was a permanent component in safeguarding the world order. Either in the unprecedented military build-up and operational capabilities of NATO, or in the actual use of force all over the world (the so-called regional conflicts which indeed involved almost all states). Therefore, in terms of hegemony, not one of these world orders seem to fulfil the criteria of a world hegemony. One can speak of domination, or of "bids for domination", but not of hegemony.

Finally, not a single "bid" of the above-mentioned was based on globally-ordered social forces. In all cases, the project in question was defined exclusively on infra-global scales. Even large empires that went beyond the limits of their immediate communities and had universalistic pretensions, such as the Roman or the Islamic empires, were based on a specific group defined either along ethnic or/and geographical lines (The Romans and the Arabs then the Turks respectively). Consequently, none of all previously-mentioned world orders can be described as a world hegemony.

Yet negating the existence of a world hegemony does not mean the abandoning of investigating the ongoing process of consensus-building in world politics. This process is now well-documented: scholars from various theoretical and academic origins agree on certain of its features, albeit they differ radically concerning its interpretation. An outstanding

example is the evolutionary tradition which conceives modernity as an ongoing process that increasingly incorporates all parts of the world¹⁶¹. In this tradition, the consensus-building is synonymous to modernization, and includes all historical events associated with its advent. Another example is that of historical sociologists who conceive Modernity as a rupture between a world of diversity and an emerging dynamic of unification and standardization¹⁶². In this perspective, modern history contributes increasingly to the constitution of a global unit of interaction, characterized by uniformity. This perception is also found within world-system theories, where the modern world-system is distinguished from pre-modern world systems by its universal tendencies: Capitalism and market-economy are considered to have a global vocation since their emergence in the late fifteenth century.¹⁶³ All these perceptions, in spite of their differences, identify an increase in consensus-building in the successive modern world orders. Modern conquests were associated with transformations in the conquered social formations and not only their annexation to the victorious empire. Both in the case of Americas "discovery" or of Africa's colonization, the modern "bids for mastery" included a transformative component: transforming the economies of "conquered" areas either directly (by colonization) or indirectly (by integration in trade networks). It also included a transformation of

¹⁶¹ Examples for this perception are various, see for instance Francis Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man, The Free Press, New York, 1992.

¹⁶² Anthony Giddens, Consequences of Modernity, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1990.

¹⁶³ Immanuel Wallerstein, The Modern World-System

societal organization (the so-called modernization), either directly such as is the case in French colonies, or indirectly: through induced imitation, spill-over effects, etc. These transformations also affected political organization: either directly like the changes introduced in all colonies, or by stimulation as was the case of Japan, Turkey or Egypt. Finally, ideology was transformed either by replacement (colonial education) or by imitation and spill-over effects.¹⁶⁴ These transformations did contribute to a more-or-less progressive build-up of consensus all over the world. This is the consensus that pushed some to prematurely speak of the end of history.¹⁶⁵

This process of consensus-building has been neglected by the actor-centred connotation of world-hegemony. Structural connotation has been more conscious of it: that is one major contribution of Gill's proposition of a transnational American-led hegemony.¹⁶⁶ I argue that the Gramscian concept of passive revolution is more likely to account for this process of consensus-building than that of "world hegemony". A passive revolution is the concept of transformation *par excellence*: it occurs where there are more than one historic bloc in conflict, where social forces at the defense of these blocs are able neither to obliterate, nor to incorporate one another. The concept of passive revolution implies a more frequent use of force than is the case with hegemony, and refers directly to the

¹⁶⁴ For a full account of these transformations, see: Serge Latouche, L'occidentalisation du monde, Paris, La Decouverte, 1989.

¹⁶⁵ Francis Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man

¹⁶⁶ Stephen Gill, American Hegemony...

crucial importance of leadership: the Caesarism. In a world order characterized by constant and deepening transformations, by a multiplicity of historic blocs, by alliances of social forces attempting to acquiesce the others as they fail to incorporate them, by permanent use of force and/or its threat, it seems plausible to make a case for the utility of the concept of passive revolution.

2. Modernity, passive revolution and the construction of "world hegemony"

A passive revolution on a world scale refers here to the long march of Modernity from its early beginnings to the present time. It seems less useful, and certainly out of the reach of the present thesis, to try to fix the date of the beginning of Modernity. Scholars agree to consider the turning point roughly sometime during the XVth and XVIth century.¹⁶⁷ This is surely a wide margin, but what is more interesting for the purposes of this thesis is to identify the logic, dynamics, mechanisms and actors of this alleged passive revolution rather than its starting point. Passive revolution is considered here as a complex process of successive transformations that lead to a progressive build-up of consensus. Its logic is to expand and consolidate a historic bloc based on Modernity. Expansion means both the replacement of other historic blocs in the world (by the modern bloc) and the unification of the multiplicity of blocs into

¹⁶⁷ See for example: Immanuel Wallerstein, The Modern World-System, Anthony Giddens, Violence and Nation-State, and Fernand Braudel, La dynamique du capitalisme

a single, universal and exclusive historic bloc. Thus, this global passive revolution is itself the process by which a global polity, and a world hegemony, is constructed.

To operationalize this concept, more specifications are needed. First, the composition of the modern historic bloc, which is supposed to be the base of the global passive revolution, needs to be specified. Second, social forces involved in its conduct should be identified. Finally the relation between the global passive revolution and the interstate system needs to be clarified.

2.1. The modern historic bloc

The modern historic bloc includes four elements: a form of economy based on the supremacy of the market, a political organization based on the state, a societal organization based on individualism, and an ideology based on the disenchantment of Man.

The form of economy based on the supremacy of the market is a distinctive aspect of the modern historic bloc. Contrary to the conventional liberal wisdom according to which the market economy is the *normal* form of economy, the one that has always been there, *by nature*, Karl Polanyi demonstrates that this form is specific to modernity.¹⁶⁸ The vital distinction here is between economy and market, a distinction that liberalism always ignored. Polanyi shows, through an examination of anthropological data and research conclusions, that although all societies

¹⁶⁸ Karl Polanyi, The Great Transformation, Beacon Press, Boston, 1971 [1944].

had a notion of the market. only modern societies make of it the organizing principle of economic life:

No society could, naturally, live for any length of time unless it possessed an economy of some sort; but previously to our time no economy has ever existed that, even in principle, was controlled by markets. In spite of the chorus of academic incantations so persistent in the nineteenth century, gain and profit made on exchange never before played an important part in human economy. Though the institution of the market was fairly common since the later Stone Age, its role was no more than incidental to economic life.¹⁶⁹

From a radically different perspective, Paul Kennedy proposes a similar argument. In his analysis of the pre-modern empires, he demonstrates that both Islamic and Chinese empires had developed commercial and economic activities comparable (and in some cases superior) to their European counterparts. Ming China had a strong Navy that traded overseas until 1433 when the Chinese state decided to destroy its overseas Navy and to "turn its back on the world"¹⁷⁰. Both in China and the Muslim world, markets were under the control of the state, which prevented them systematically from gaining control over the economic life as a whole. It is this control, according to Kennedy, that made the difference between these pre-modern empires and Western Europe: it halted the market-men in the Muslim world and in China while it released their forces in western Europe:

Papal pronouncements upon usury echo in many ways the Confucian dislike of profit-making middlemen and money-lenders. But the basic fact was that there existed no uniform authority in Europe which could effectively halt this or that commercial development.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ Karl Polanyi, The Great Transformation, p. 43.

¹⁷⁰ Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall...., p. 7.

¹⁷¹ ibid., pp. 19-20.

The radical difference between the market-led economy and its other forms is that it is only in the former that economy becomes disembedded from society. Polanyi insists on the disembedded nature of market economy, but this idea is also echoed in Kennedy's analysis. All other forms of economy were under the control of society, either through the principles of societal organization or through the existing polity. Some of the pre-modern societies controlled economy by the principle of societal organization themselves. This was the case, for example, with the Western Melanesian Community where the two basic principles of behaviour, reciprocity and redistribution, governed economic behaviour as well as all other behaviours. In more complex societies, such as Ancient Egypt (or the Muslim world and Ming China according to Kennedy), economic life was regulated by the same institutions that regulated other societal spheres. Thus, as Kennedy shows, the economic prosperity of both Ming China and the Muslim world took place under tight control of the Confucian bureaucracy and the Muslim governors respectively. It is only in western Europe, due to the constant competition among princes, that market-men could escape this control. This confirms the conclusions of Polanyi according to which markets existed but were always, in pre-modern societies, under the control of the polity. It is only with modernity that market takes overall control of economic life. With the invention of a market-led economy, the economic sphere developed its own institutions and its own rules of regulation. Moreover, the now disembedded market economy takes control over other societal spheres and pushes in the direction of creating a

market-led society.¹⁷² Thus, it is the domination of economy by the market, and its constant attempt to control other societal spheres that marks the difference between modern and pre-modern forms of economy.

The modern political organization is based on the territorial state. Although the category state is used to describe all kinds of central power that ever existed in history, it is used here to refer specifically to the modern forms of state, the territorial one. This territorial political organization emerged in the absolutist state and reached its climax in the nation-state:

In terms of the development of a novel type of reflexively monitored state system, then, absolutism began to prise open the discontinuities that separate the modern world from prior epochs.¹⁷³

Although it retained elements of the feudal world that preceded it, absolutist state was a *new form of political organization*, the first polity ordered on modern bases. By "modern bases", I refer to the disembeddedness of politics from the rest of societal spheres, and the emergence of specialized political institutions that regulate this sphere per se. This idea of disembeddedness is derived from both the analysis of Polanyi and that of Anthony Giddens:

¹⁷² For more details over the contrast between pre-modern forms of economy and the modern form based on the market, as well as its supportive anthropological evidence, see: Karl Polanyi, The Great Transformation, pp. 43-76.

¹⁷³ Anthony Giddens, Nation-State and Violence, p. 93.

By disembedding I mean the "lifting out" of social relations from local contexts of interaction and their restructuring across indefinite spans of time-space.¹⁷⁴

In this perspective, the absolutist state witnessed "the development of 'government' in the modern sense, the figure of the ruler being a personalized expression of a secularized administrative entity."¹⁷⁵ It also witnessed the emergence of the concept of citizenship in the modern sense, i.e. in a disembedded fashion, one that is "no longer applied within the confined reach of the urban commune but having as its reference the political 'community' of the state as a whole."¹⁷⁶ The Absolutist state also witnessed the start of a strictly modern (in the sense of disembedding) process that is going to continue and to be consolidated in the nation-state: the expansion of central administrative power, the invention of new institutions and rules of making the law, and the enhancement of the state capacity to manage fiscality.¹⁷⁷ The nation-state will add to this, besides the consolidation of these trends, the pacification of its territory and the perfection of its monopoly of violence as well as the emergence of the nation as a collective abstract reference.¹⁷⁸

Tightly related to both of the preceding elements is the modern rupture with traditional societal organization. The debate about the

¹⁷⁴ Anthony Giddens, The Consequences of Modernity, p. 21.

¹⁷⁵ A. Giddens, Nation-State and Violence, pp. 93-94.

¹⁷⁶ ibid., p. 94.

¹⁷⁷ ibid., p. 95.

¹⁷⁸ ibid., pp. 116-121.

modern *forms* of societal organization (class structures versus other lines of demarcation) is much less relevant to this discussion. Instead, I focus here on the underpinning principle of the modern societal organization, which is latent to all such modern forms. Louis Dumont suggested that the basic rupture between modern and non-modern forms of societal organization is the opposition individualism-holism, where individualism is the base of the modern society:

De ce point de vue, il y a deux sortes de sociétés. Là où l'Individu est la valeur suprême je parle d'*individualism*; dans le cas opposé, où la valeur se trouve dans la société comme un tout, je parle de *holism*.¹⁷⁹

Dumont explains in details how the modern society is characterized by individualism while the non-modern is marked by holism.¹⁸⁰ As far as societal organization is concerned, the difference is fundamental: all modern forms of organization, like those of voluntary associations, political parties, unions, etc., the underlying principle is a society composed of individuals, not of communities. Both market-led economy and nation-state are organically linked to the individualization of

¹⁷⁹ Louis Dumont, Essais sur l'individualisme: une perspective anthropologique sur l'idéologie moderne, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1991 [1983], p. 37.

¹⁸⁰ Louis Dumont, Homo hierarchicus, Paris, Gallimard, 1979.

society.¹⁸¹ The very concept of Human Rights presupposes an individually ordered society.¹⁸²

Finally, the underpinning principle ordering the fourth component of the modern historic bloc, ideology, is also linked to the other three. Modern forms of ideology are based on the disenchantment of Man. Be it liberal, Marxist, anarchist, humanist, or any other ideological form, modern ideologies are founded on the idea of a self-mastered individual, free from both metaphysical and meta-individual obligations. In his analysis of the political history of religion, Marcel Gauchet summarizes the modern notion of disenchantment as "the end of the reign of the invisible"¹⁸³. This principle is interwoven with other principles of modernity, especially that of individualism and of disembedding. Therefore, Dumont's and Rosenvallón's suggestion to identify modern ideology in the rise of economic thinking and its corollary principle of rationality is not in contradiction with individualism. The rise of the economic thinking and rationality-as-ideology is certainly a modern ideology, but it is based on the individual's self-perception as being responsible for his own destiny, the individual as being emancipated and free.

¹⁸¹ For more details over this point, see: Pierre Rosenvallón, La crise de l'État-Providence, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1981, pp. 97-106.

¹⁸² For more details, see: Yvon Thériault, "Individualisation, universalisation, démocratisation: le temps de l'histoire", in: Possible, vol. 15, n° 2, Spring 1991, pp. 127-140.

¹⁸³ Marcel Gauchet, Le désenchantement du monde, Paris, Gallimard, 1985, p. II.

These four elements of the modern historic bloc are interrelated. Some might suggest a causal relation between certain elements, others might even reduce the four elements to mere consequences of the advent of a market-led economy. In any case, the present analysis is more interested in the identification of these four elements as four dimensions of the modern historic bloc. The details of causalities, as important as they might be, are secondary to the purposes of this analysis.

2.2. The identification of acting social forces

The global passive revolution is perceived here as a process that involves various social forces that have various (and sometimes opposing) "projects". In this sense, the said process is neither a "conspiracy" nor an "intended comprehensive project" of a specific social force, and it does not proceed in terms of "necessities" or follow a pre-determined path to attain specific objectives. As a historical process, it develops through a dynamic of both structures and actors, of opportunities and strategies. The previous actions create new dynamics, open new opportunities and new turns to which respond (or do not) the existing social forces. Each of them has its own scheme of interests and preferences, i.e. its project as defined in time/space, but not a single social force can guarantee that it will be able to implement this project as it is initially designed, nor that it, once presumably implemented, will give the anticipated results.

In this perspective, the identification of social forces involved in the global passive revolution depend on the time/space configuration.

Thus, in the heydays of colonization, the social forces involved are not necessary those that are involved in a different phase or in a different enterprise. Still, certain social forces *have always been entrepreneurial* in the global passive revolution. Historically, the West European social forces played a decisive role in the launching of the process: all four dimensions of the modern historic bloc were born and consolidated in the West. It is more difficult, and to some extent less relative to the present purposes, to identify who did what and when. However, in a schematic way, it is clear that the merchant bourgeoisie in Western Europe always played a vital role in the propagation of the modern historic bloc both inside and outside Europe. Secondly, it is clear that the forces involved in the construction of a global hegemony (the passive revolution) had double vocations: they had both national and global links. Balibar and Wallerstein suggest that there were various "projects of hegemony" opened to the bourgeoisie, each of them was related to a certain type of economic exploitation, and that the configuration of the then-present constraints and opportunities led to the prevalence of "national hegemony" and to the consolidation of the nation-state.¹⁸⁴ This is a useful explanation in so far that it sheds a light into the double character of the actions of the European Bourgeoisie: since its early days, it played both national and global roles. Other social forces participate in the process while attempting to achieve other goals. Groups that are defending universal goals, such as the Enlightenment intellectuals and humanists, the

¹⁸⁴ Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, Race, nation, classe: les identités ambiguës, Paris, La Découverte, 1990, p. 122.

developmentalists and global charitists, advocates of environment protection, human rights activists, and religious, all fit in this category.

2.3. The global passive revolution and the interstate system

This global passive revolution is not a negation of the interstate system. On the contrary, this system is its principal mechanism. Balibar and Wallerstein demonstrate that the European bourgeoisie used the national scale it created to enhance its interests on global scale.¹⁸⁵ Similarly, the universalization of the inter-state system is a historical creation of social forces that were hegemonic in Western Europe. This does not necessarily imply *an instrumentalist* perception of the interstate system vis-à-vis the said social forces. Such a system has its own dynamics and was subjected to different kinds of pressures. It only implies that as far as the construction of a global hegemony is concerned, the interstate system was the principal instrument of the social forces interested in this construction. The history of the inter-state system is supportive of this argument: this system, which now covers the entire globe, did not emerge as a "natural evolution" of local forms of political organization all over the world. It was *created and universalized* by the same social forces that defend the modern historic bloc: i.e. the Western dominant social forces. The nation-state which was born in Western Europe was *transplanted* to other areas of the world. Bertrand Badie analyzes two

¹⁸⁵ Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, Race, nation, classe...

main forms that this transplantation took. The first is direct colonization: European dominant social forces, and their allies, literally created states in areas that did not know this form of political organization. The second is intimidation: in the more complex societies, the fear of European domination ignited the central political authorities to introduce changes imitating the Western state. The objective was to "modernise" their political, administrative and military capabilities to be able to face the rising power of the West. It is in this way that countries such as Turkey or Egypt independently sought to be integrated in the modern historic bloc.¹⁸⁶ This transplantation contributed to the construction of world hegemony (global passive revolution) in two ways: on the one hand, it installed a new form of political organization consistent with the modern historic bloc, and on the other it integrated the said area in the inter-state system that was previously reserved for European states. By the end of the nineteenth-century, the known surface of the globe was fully integrated in the inter-state system. As Bertrand Badie demonstrates, the transplanted state in the non-European areas is, by its genesis and its nature, a part of an inter-state "neo-patrimonial" order in which the "prince of the North" is the *patron* and the "prince of the South" is the client. Their relation is based on the exchange of benefits and services: loyalty and conformity from the client, protection and financial resources from the *patron*.¹⁸⁷ This neo-patrimonial system was consolidated and generalized with decolonization and the accession of

¹⁸⁶ Bertrand Badie, L'État importé, Paris, Fayard, 1992.

¹⁸⁷ ibid., pp. 23-24.

"newly independent states" to the theoretical status of "members of international society" and the United Nations Organization. Through this neo-patrimonial relation, the social forces involved in the global passive revolution continued to operate: through interstate programmes of aid, direct intervention, trade, communications flows, non-governmental organizations, etc., the transformation of the local historic blocs continued to progress. The internationalization of production and of state, which Cox identifies as a trade-mark of "Pax Americana", was not *created* by some American invention, it is a turning point in the long march of a globalizing process at work since the early days of modernity. This logic of "passive-transformative-expansion" explains much of the international regulation issues. *The main logic of this regulation is patron-client compromise and deals (between elites in North and in South). These deals reflect both an interest in expanding modern historic bloc, but takes into account the needs for stability-during-transformation, and therefore try to avoid direct confrontation and massive destabilization. The frameworks of international regulation, therefore, are the outcome of interaction between three considerations: transformation, stability, and clientelistic exchange of gains.*

In this perspective, the leadership of the passive revolution is constituted from the dominant social forces in Western societies. These social forces have already constructed hegemonic national orders while attempting to construct, together, a global hegemony that would resemble the first. The tensions between the requirements of the "national hegemony" and those of the "allied leadership" explain most of the problems of international cooperation. *The more the issue of cooperation*

raises this tension, the more difficult it becomes to carry on (or the less efficient its framework becomes).

First, the "nationally hegemonic" social forces had to manage simultaneously the incorporation of other social forces on a national scale with all its subsequent requirements of nation-building and the maintenance of a certain degree of social cohesion, while taking measure to ensure to itself a place in the would-be global order. Sometimes both requirements could be fulfilled by the same action, as was the case with colonization. In other times, these requirements were quite opposed and led to sanguinary confrontations. The analysis made by Karl Polanyi of the rise of fascism and nazism and the subsequent World War is indicative in this regard. According to this analysis, during the period that followed the First World War, the dominant social forces preferred the fulfilment of the imperatives of the consolidation of a global market-economy than those of keeping social cohesion. This was, for example, the case with the efforts to restore the international gold standard and free trade at the expenses of social dislocations and upheavals. This strategy led to a catastrophe: fascist options took advantage of the panic generated by the threats to social (national) cohesion and order¹⁸⁸. Fascism represented a reminding victory of the risks of scarifying the imperatives of "national hegemony" in behalf of those of the global order. Nevertheless, the bloodshed that followed did not mean the end of the global enterprise. The Keynesian compromise permitted once more the management of the imperatives of both the national hegemony and the global passive revolution. With the end of Keynesianism, this management seems

¹⁸⁸ Karl Polanyi, The Great Transformation, 223-248.

increasingly difficult. Second, such as any coalition, the Caesarism of Western dominant social forces suffers from the attempts made by each party to gain profits at the expense of the others. The tensions between the interests of these hegemonic social forces undermine their capacity to act as a global coalition. These tensions are clearly reflected in the divergence of interests among Western states concerning the "burden-sharing" of their collective actions.

Finally, the ambivalent vocation of these hegemonic social forces is reflected in the ambivalent role of the inter-state system. The latter is essential to the conduct of the global passive revolution, and the basic instrument that dispose the hegemonic social forces to keep order all over the world. Yet, as Bertrand Badie and Marie-Claude Smouts as well as James Rosenau show, the dynamics of the inter-state system lead to its surpassing as it encourages both supra-national and infra-national interactions.¹⁸⁹ The internationalization of production, and the much publicized globalization of communications are the supra-national facet of this process. At the same time, this globalization gives rise to infra-national identities and revendications. Accordingly, the inter-state system is eroding simultaneously from the top (transnational links) and from the bottom (infra-national consolidation). This global restructuration is part and parcel of an older dynamics, which is the construction of a world hegemony.

¹⁸⁹ Bertrand Badie et Marie-Claude Smouts, Le retournement du monde, Paris, PUNSP & Dalloz, 1992, and James Rosenau, "Le nouvel ordre mondial: forces sous-jacentes et resultats", Etudes internationales, mars 1992.

C. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND REGULATION REVISITED

This section examines the capacity of the theoretical and analytical propositions, presented in the previous two sections, to explain the three phenomena that the present connotations of "world hegemony" could not account for. These are: the absence of connection between the so-called "American hegemony" and the consolidation of international cooperation, the strengthening of international regulation while cooperation is shrinking, and the heterogeneity of the difficulty in establishing frameworks for cooperation and their efficiency once established¹⁹⁰.

1. The connection between "American hegemony" and international cooperation and regulation

Neither the success nor the decline in international cooperation and regulation can be connected to the supremacy of the American state's capabilities as suggests the debate over the so-called "decline of American hegemony". It is not the United States that created it, nor has the decline in its capabilities led to its disappearance. Applying the concept of global passive revolution suggests that the fate of international cooperation was always determined by the capacity of the dominant Western social forces to reconcile the tensions between the imperatives of its national hegemony with those of the build-up of a world

¹⁹⁰ For more details, see chapter II-B.

hegemony. In this perspective, we can better understand the contours of the GATT negotiations. Since its early beginnings, the GATT negotiations touched issues at the heart of these tensions. The issues which did not undermine national cohesion went more smoothly than those which undermined it. This was the case in the 1950s, in the Kennedy Round in 1967, in Tokyo Round in 1979, and lately in the Uruguay Round in 1994. Regardless of the changes of the role of the United States in the world economy, these negotiations were constantly under the attack from advocates of national cohesion, even inside the United States itself.¹⁹¹ In France, for example, the conclusion of the last Round witnessed a public debate in which national cohesion was clearly presented as opposing global order. Hence, the demarcation line was drawn between the imperatives of national hegemony and those dictated by the process of building-up a global market.¹⁹²

In issues that do not undermine the imperatives of the national hegemony, international cooperation has more chances to be conducted smoothly *regardless of the shape of the American role in world economy*. This was the case with the cooperation for the protection of the ozone layer. In an international context described as "post-hegemonic" a whole process of cooperation was launched and led to the establishment of frameworks for collective action, i.e. the Montreal Protocol. This framework of action was rendered possible basically for two reasons: 1) It

¹⁹¹ Robert Gilpin, The Political Economy of International Relations, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1987, 192-199 and 373.

¹⁹² For some details of this debate see: Le Monde Diplomatique, December, 1993.

did not undermine any of the global historic bloc components, especially the market-led economy. As substitutes to CFCs were made available at a reasonable cost, chemical industries, especially the influential American-based Du Pont, were convinced of the possibility of the phasing out of CFCs. Moreover, this protocol permitted the establishment of a global rule that would homogenize the conditions of competition among chemical industries; 2) It did not threaten any active social force within the "national hegemonies", on the contrary, it permitted the hegemonic social forces to rally the support of other active social forces in reassuring its "universal" commitment to protect the environment and the well-being of the population. That explains both the fact that a general agreement on the reduction then the elimination of CFCs could have been achieved, and the rapidity and relative ease with which the necessary negotiations were conducted.

2. Shrinking cooperation versus strengthening regulation

As defined in the introduction, international regulation is a form of cooperation that includes an imposition of rules and norms over subordinate states. The denotations of this regulation range from the operations of the IMF and the World Bank to the use of sanctions against states abusing "Human Rights". Chapter two referred to the restructuring of the economic, political and social scenery in Central & Eastern Europe and ex-USSR as an example of this rising regulation. The concept of the construction of a world hegemony (or the global passive revolution)

provides an explanation of the ongoing strengthening of international regulation in comparison with shrinking cooperation. It attributes the difficulties of international cooperation to the limits of the capacity of Western European hegemonic social forces to reconcile the imperatives of their hegemonic national orders and those of the build-up of a global hegemony. International regulation follows a radically different logic: it depends on the neo-patrimonial relation between the "Princes of the North" and those of the "South". The other social forces incorporated in the national Western hegemonies are either indifferent to this relation or interested in its consolidation. This is the case of the previously-mentioned groups that defend global objectives such as democratization and respect of human rights. Therefore, the fate of international regulation is not connected to that of cooperation as each of them refers to a different set of political alliances and compromises. In addition, international regulation does not endanger the national hegemonies in the West as is sometimes the case with cooperation (such as the GATT). On the contrary, international regulation helps to consolidate these national hegemonies in so far as it reasserts the universality of its underpinning principles. The coordinated aid to the CEEC and ex-USSR countries, for example, reconfirms the universal truth of democracy, Human Rights, peace and security as well as that of "free market". Each of these element is capable alone of mobilizing certain social forces behind it, or at least, keeping it away from protesting the programmes in question. Still, when these programmes hit certain incorporated social forces in Western hegemonies (such as farmers, fishermen, etc.), the implementation of the said programmes becomes more difficult. The outcome depends on the ability

of the hegemonic social forces to manage these minor contradictions. Other examples of international regulation are equally supportive: sanctions against Sudan on the grounds of Human Rights abuse, or against Zaire for halting democratization, or the intervention in Somalia, etc., all would be meaningless if analyzed in the light of the debate over "American hegemony". It is only in relating these efforts to the larger process of the construction of a world hegemony (the global passive revolution) that they make sense.

3. International cooperation à plusieurs vitesses

The third phenomenon of international cooperation that is unexplained by the current conceptions of world hegemony is the different degree of difficulty with which frameworks of cooperation are built, and of their efficiency once established. Using the proposed conceptualization of world hegemony, I argue that the degree of ease and efficiency of cooperation frameworks is proportional to their harmony with the components of the modern historic bloc and inversely related to its contradiction with national hegemonies. Thus, cooperation frameworks that encourage the expansion of market-led economy, individualism, democracy or disenchantment are likely to be constructed easier than those which oppose those components (with various degrees). Also, cooperation frameworks which are in direct opposition to the cohesion of Western national hegemonies are likely to be much more difficult to build than those which

do not oppose them. This rule applies similarly to the efficiency of these cooperation frameworks.

In practice, all cases of actual international cooperation frameworks are supportive of this proposition. GATT negotiations have already made the case for the relation between threats to national hegemonic order and difficulty in concluding cooperation frameworks. In comparing these negotiations to those of the cooperation for ozone protection, the case becomes more evident. Similarly, in the domain of the environment, the disparity between the ease with which the Montreal Protocol was concluded and the problems that prevent negotiations on reductions of CO₂ from being even held is suggestive. Both cases belong to the same domain, both have almost the same relation to the national hegemonies' cohesion, and both are taking place almost at the same time and in the same international context. Still, one was easy to build and is widely considered to be almost a complete success, while the other involved difficult negotiations and is widely considered as almost a total failure. The only difference that distinguishes these two cases is their relation to modern historic bloc. The ozone protection Protocol did not undermine any element of the modern historic bloc, especially the market-led economy. On the contrary, the Montreal Protocol permitted the CFCs-related production to restructure its activities within a global rule that guaranteed uniform conditions of competition. It also helped to create new markets for CFCs-substitutes in the extra-Western world: in Russia, China, India and the "Third World". This is not the case with CO₂: a reduction in CO₂ emission implies changes in the actual form of economy, changes for which no market-friendly solution has been found yet. ~

Finally, the case of coordinated aid programmes to the CEEC and the ex-USSR seems to support the propositions of this thesis. The said programmes are in perfect harmony with the modern historic bloc, in accordance with the basic elements of the Western national hegemonies, and indeed is a part of the global passive revolution itself. In this case, the cooperation framework was very rapidly built, smoothly conducted and (as a framework of cooperation) is to be considered a strong success. What is less successful is the objective of this framework, not its establishment and functioning as such. Difficulties that might encounter the transformative projects of the West in the CEEC and the ex-USSR, or their ultimate failure, are no indication of the failure of the cooperation framework itself. Nor is the reluctance of certain states to pour in the aid packages they have previously pledged, as this is just an attempt either to get the targeted changes on the cheap, or to transfer part of the implied financial burdens on to the shoulder of another member in the Caesarist leadership. Regardless of these manoeuvres, and of the difficulty of the transformation as such, the international framework of cooperation was established in record time and with virtually no objection.

D. CONCLUSION

This chapter makes two propositions; one is theoretical, the other is analytical. It suggests that the connotation of the concept of world hegemony be reassessed in the light of its coherence and its

distinctiveness from other related connotations. It then suggests an instrumental verification of the analytical proposition, which concerns the denotation of the concept.

Thus, the chapter proposed a Gramscian-based connotation of world hegemony built on the distinction between domination and hegemony. World hegemony is viewed as a description of sets of social relations, and based upon a homogenous global historic bloc. The latter is defined as a configuration of four elements: a form of economy, political organization, societal organization, and an ideology. In certain cases, there is no single historic bloc that is dominant, instead, there are social forces engaged in a transformative enterprise attempting to render dominant a specific historic bloc. This is what Gramsci called a passive revolution. In this case, a phenomenon of "Caesarism" emerges, where an actor (or a coalition of actors) takes the lead of this transformative process and tries to enhance it without the participation of the masses (who are connected to other historic blocs and targeted by the transformative process).

In applying these concepts on the world scale, there appeared to be no historical instance for the connotation of world hegemony. Instead, the successive world orders since the advent of modernity seem to fit in the register of passive revolution. Where the expansion of the modern historic bloc is at the heart of the transformative process, led by West European hegemonic social forces, and incorporating other social forces occasionally. This global passive revolution is a process of constructing a world hegemony, as it targets the transformation of all present historic blocs into a single, dominant, and global bloc. This modern bloc is

composed of a form of economy based on the supremacy of the market, a political organization based on the territorial nation-state, a societal organization based on individualism, and forms of ideology based on disenchantment. The leading Caesarist social forces of this process are the social forces hegemonic in the West, who are leading simultaneously a group of national hegemonies and a common global passive revolution. The latter depends on the inter-state system, which the universalization is one of its acts, and which leads to its surpassing by the encouraging of both trans-national and infra-national interactions. Thus, the successive world orders from the early days of modernity until present time have a cumulative character as they all contributed to the transformation and unification of the world.

This conceptualization claims to better account for questions of international cooperation and regulation. The third section applied it to the three phenomena that the current conceptions of world hegemony failed to explain. These three phenomena are: the disconnection between the so-called "American hegemony" and international cooperation and regulation, i.e. the fact that there was cooperation before, during and after "American hegemony", and that the difficulties of these frameworks of cooperation were present in all times regardless of the role of the United States in the world economy. The second is the strengthening of regulation while the cooperation is shrinking, and the third is the differences in the difficulties with which frameworks of international cooperation are established and in their efficiency once they are working. In all the three cases, and using the same examples of the GATT negotiations, coordinated aid to the CEEC and ex-USSR, and the cooperation efforts for

the protection of the environment, the proposed conceptualization proves to be more helpful in accounting for their contours. The limits of this thesis, as well as its purposes, does not permit further and more detailed examination of these propositions, yet, it sheds a useful light into the possibility of an alternative conception of "world hegemony" that might permit a better understanding of world politics.

CONCLUSION

The concept of world hegemony is currently used in both Realist and Marxist traditions in various ways. The absence of consensus over its connotation, and the multiplicity of its historical denotations raise concerns about its validity. W.E. Connolly finds in this lack of consensus a good reason to contest the concept itself. However, an examination of the multiple connotations given to the concept permits to find common grounds around which most scholars converge. Hence, world hegemony is conceived in two basic ways: the first is actor-centered that considers hegemony as a supremacy in power resources, and present it as an inter-state relation. This connotation is shared by Kindleberger, Krasner, Strange, Kennedy, Gilpin, Keohane as well as many Marxist scholars such as Wallerstein and Arrighi. Robert Cox presents a structural connotation of the concept that conceives hegemony as a description of the structure of world order. Thus, world hegemony describes a world order characterized by a prevalent ideology, a set of agreed-upon rules and norms, and an affinity in major states' interests. This connotation is nearer to what Gilpin calls "political framework" and also to the concept of "international regimes". Once the multiplicity of connotations is reduced, the absence of consensus over historical denotations becomes less important, and the normative character of the concept can be minimized. Therefore, the concept of world hegemony is not as essentially contestable as Connolly suggests.

Yet, this concept, as it stands now, proves to have serious limits to its explanatory power. The debate over the "decline" of "American hegemony" illustrates these limits. The "hegemonic stability theory", the theory of "international regimes" and that of structural hegemony, all fail to account satisfactorily for issues of international cooperation and regulation. The examples of the GATT negotiations, the coordinated aid to Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) and ex-USSR as well as those of the cooperation for the protection of the environment, suggest that there is no link between the so-called "American hegemony" and the fate of cooperation or regulation. Moreover, these theories fail to explain the apparent strengthening of international regulation while cooperation is shrinking. Finally, they fail to account for the difference in the degree of difficulty with which frameworks of cooperation and regulation are built, and the variation in their efficiency once they are built.

I have argued that the origin of these limits lie in the theoretical foundations that underpin their connotations of the concept of "world hegemony". The actor-centred connotation misses the changes in the structures of the world order and its impact on actors' behaviour. In adhering to an inter-state level of analysis, it also misses the dynamics that take place on trans-national and on infra-national levels. On the other hand, the structural connotation is undermined by its economic bias, which makes the concept of little use in areas not related directly to production. Secondly, its universalistic perception of historical structures prevents it from grasping differences between cooperation and regulation. It also prevents it from understanding the cumulative consensus-building associated with the succession of world orders.

especially in areas outside the West. Finally, this connotation emphasizes the changes in structures while ignoring actors' strategies. Consequently, it falls short of its promise to understand the role of social forces in the making of world orders.

In an attempt to avoid these shortcomings, I have proposed a connotation of world hegemony based on the writings of Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci distinguishes between hegemony and mere domination, and also emphasizes the embeddedness of hegemony within social relations. A world hegemony should, in theory, be based on a single, homogenous and dominant historic bloc, i.e. a form of economy, of politics, of society and of ideology. Its should also be backed by global social forces whose interests are dependent on this bloc. However, this does not seem to be the case. There has always been a multiplicity of historical blocs defended by different national social forces. Therefore, I concluded that there is no historical denotation yet for the concept of world hegemony. Instead, there is a process of consensus-building, or a passive revolution in Gramscian terms. This passive revolution is a global transformative process by which world hegemony is constructed. At its base lies the modern historic bloc, and is defended mainly by the social forces hegemonic in the West. These social forces have both national and global interests and strategies. The tension between the requirements of both strategies explain much of the difficulties of international cooperation. These social forces have clientelistic relationship with governing elites in peripheral social formations. The logic of this relationship is characterized by the tension between three poles: first, the

transformative consequences of the expansion of modern historic bloc in these peripheries. Second, the crucial importance of stability and acquiescence during transformation, which gives the construction of global hegemony its "passive" character. The third pole is the requirements of the patron-client exchange of benefits and services. Frameworks of international regulation are the outcome of different combinations, in specific time and space, between these three poles.

This conception of world hegemony seems to better account for the issues of international cooperation and regulation. The examples of the GATT, the coordinated aid to the East as well as the environmental cooperation frameworks seem to be supportive of this claim. However, a detailed investigation that would have permitted a full verification of this claim is beyond the reach and the purposes of the present thesis.

Such a conception of world hegemony raises two other theoretical concerns that were not examined directly in this thesis. The first is the analytical separation between sociological research and international political economy. The second is the separation between domestic and world politics. Both cases of separation seem to be increasingly meaningless. In my attempt to understand issues of international political economy such as those of the GATT negotiations, I had to search for explanatory factors both in relations within states as well as relations among states. Also, I had to call on sociological research to understand the foundations of the present patterns of behaviour. It is clear that this research can be excluded if we are concerned primarily by the description. But once explanations are needed, other fields of social sciences are called upon.

The analysis made by Karl Polanyi of the market economy is a good example of this resort to sociology, and indeed, to anthropology. Polanyi was concerned primarily by the role of state in the economy and the consequences of its withdrawal. Yet, to understand and explain the changes in this role, he had to investigate the prevalent form of economy itself and to call on research of its other possible forms. Similarly, to understand the contours and the developments of, for example, the coordinated aid to the East and the difficulties that are encountered in the planned transformations there, one has to call upon sociological research. This is equally true for the separation between domestic and world politics. Proposing that world hegemony construction is a global process does not mean an imminent disappearance of states, it only means that states are not the appropriate level of analysis, and that they are part of what is to be explained, not an explanatory factor. Consequently, understanding the state is part and parcel to understanding world politics. Without a clear theory of state, we can hardly explain its behaviour in world affairs. This is the basic problem with the Realist tradition in international relations theory: as it considers the interests of states exogenously, it fails to account for state action itself. Accordingly, understanding international cooperation and regulation is inseparable from understanding "domestic politics". The construction of world hegemony, as a process, lies in the intersection of both domestic and world politics, and recalls the need to incorporate sociological research into international relations theory.

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