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I believe that this innovative approach to undergraduate publication will continue to make a strong contribution to the advancement of knowledge and will encourage students to produce work of the highest quality. I would like to thank the editorial committee, York University Libraries and our library advisor Dany Savard and faculty advisor Dr. Montsion for without their dedication, none of this would be possible. The Department of International Studies deserves the same recognition for supporting this initiative, offering important guidance and for recommending papers.

Stefan Kecojevic

Managing Editor 2012-2013



## **Democratic Peace Theory** *La théorie de la paix démocratique*

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**Abstract:** In this paper I present a summary and analysis of the existing literature surrounding the democratic peace theory. I argue that due to methodological gaps in the conceptualization of the theory, empirical evidence has so far yielded non definitive results. This is due to two crucial factors; the first is that proponents tend to mistakenly present democracy as a dichotomous variable, and the second is that other independent variables are often empirically inseparable from democracy. I hypothesize that by re-conceptualizing democracy as a measurable rather than dichotomous variable, we will be better equipped to determine whether or not the observed relationship between democracy and a reduction in militarized interstate disputes is a causal relationship or a mere correlation.

*Résumé: Dans cet article, je présente un résumé ainsi qu'une analyse de la littérature existante au sujet de la théorie de la paix démocratique. En raison de lacunes méthodologiques dans la conceptualisation de la théorie, les études empiriques ont jusqu'ici donné des résultats non définitifs. Je soutiens que cela est dû à deux facteurs: d'une part, ses promoteurs font fausse piste en présentant la démocratie comme une variable dichotomique et, d'autre part, ils oublient l'importance de variables indépendantes tiers qui sont souvent empiriquement inséparables de la notion de démocratie. Je pose l'hypothèse que, par la re-conceptualisation de la démocratie comme une variable mesurable plutôt que dichotomique, nous serons ainsi mieux équipés à déterminer si la relation observée entre la notion de démocratie et la réduction des conflits inter-étatiques militarisés constitue une relation de cause à effet ou une simple corrélation.*



In recent years, western countries (but more specifically U.S. governments) have cited the democratic peace theory, an unproven and increasingly vulnerable ideological framework, as prime justification for their foreign policy. At the most basic level, the theoretical underpinnings of the democratic peace are based on the supposed existence of a causal relationship between democracy and a reduction in the propensity to go to war. It stems from a positivist epistemological approach in that it seeks to establish a law that democracy necessarily reduces likelihood of warfare, which according to proponents, is due to pacifistic behaviour stemming from the normative and institutional characteristics of democratic states.<sup>1</sup>

The theoretical debates on the issue emerge at the most basic definitional level. Proponents tend to define democracy along normative lines, with relatively arbitrary concepts. According to John M. Owen, a democracy is “a state that instantiates liberal ideas, one where liberalism is the dominant ideology”.<sup>2</sup> For critics on the other side of the spectrum, the concept of democracy tends to be much more concrete. According to Schwartz and Skinner, a democracy can be defined along six objective criteria, mainly “broad adult suffrage, competitive elections, the usual civil liberties, the rule of law, equality before the law, and a fair measure of either popular choice or legislative control over the executive.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sebastian Rosato, “The Flawed Logic of the Democratic Peace Theory,” *American Political Science Review* 97 (2003): 586-587.

<sup>2</sup> John M. Owen, “How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace,” *International Security* 19 (1994): 89.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Schwartz & Kiron Skinner, “The Myth of the Democratic Peace,” *Orbis* 46 (2002): 161.



Furthermore, definitional inconsistencies, particularly the differences between the abstract and concrete conceptualizations, will be a crucial point of analysis.

Although empirical studies have demonstrated a clear and incontestable correlation between democracy and a reduction in the likelihood of Militarized Interstate Disputes<sup>4</sup> (MIDs), the central issue is proving that this correlation amounts to a causal relationship between the two variables. To this end, proponents must establish through empirical evidence that variations in MIDs between states (the dependent variable) are directly and *necessarily* caused by variations in the governmental systems of these same states (the independent variable).<sup>5</sup> Critics who reject the theory do so with three central arguments. The first is that due to ambiguities surrounding the definitions of key terms like democracy, the theory cannot be reliably tested because the object of analysis is too vaguely and arbitrarily defined.<sup>6</sup> Secondly, due to historical contradictions of democratic states going to war, the theory has already been disproved.<sup>7</sup> Finally, many scholars assert that peace among democratic states is not caused by democracy, but by other independent variables such as modernity,<sup>8</sup> cultural

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<sup>4</sup> Lars E. Cederman & Mohan P. Rao, "Exploring the Dynamics of the Democratic Peace", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45 (2001): 818-833.

<sup>5</sup> Proponents must establish that democracy necessarily causes a reduction in MIDs because the positivist epistemological nature of the theory requires the establishment of a clearly defined law of human or state interactions. If democracy doesn't always reduce the likelihood of MIDs, then the theory, with its current positivist undertones, would not hold.

<sup>6</sup> Schwartz and Skinner, "The Myth of the Democratic Peace," 160-162.

<sup>7</sup> Rosato, "The Flawed Logic of the Democratic Peace Theory," 558.

<sup>8</sup> Azar Gat, "The Democratic Peace Theory Reframed: The Impact of Modernity," *World Politics* 58 (2005): 73-100.



factors<sup>9</sup>, economic development<sup>10</sup> or even a natural affinity among democratic states stemming from a mixture of these variables.<sup>11</sup> Keeping these critiques in mind, proponents of the democratic peace conceptualize the theory with two distinct models of analysis.

The first is the static model, which simply seeks to establish a direct causal relationship between democracy and a reduction in the likelihood of MIDs. Using a propositional calculus methodology<sup>12</sup> and a complex subsequent game theory analysis, Zinnes argues that a dyad of democracies does not engage in MIDs because their mutual pacifistic characteristics, stemming from their democratic nature, creates a non zero-sum interaction.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, dyads of democratic and authoritarian states do engage in MIDs because the actions taken by authoritarian regimes create a zero-sum interaction,<sup>14</sup> compromising the security of democratic states and forcing them to engage in MIDs.<sup>15</sup> The basic static model has two crucial implications, one at the micro and the other at the macro levels. Looking first at the micro analysis, the model

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<sup>9</sup> Errol A. Henderson, "The Democratic Peace Through the Lens of Culture, 1820-1989," *International Studies Quarterly* 24 (1998): 461-484.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Mousseau, "Market Propensity, Democratic Consolidation, and Democratic Peace," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44 (2000): 472-507.

<sup>11</sup> Eric Gartzke, "Preference and the Democratic Peace," *International Studies Quarterly* 44 (2000): 191-212.

<sup>12</sup> Propositional calculus refers to a form of mathematical logic dealing with the relationship between formed propositions disregarding their internal structures. For example, A1 causes A2 which in turn causes A3. The internal structures of the variables are disregarded.

<sup>13</sup> In game theory, a non zero-sum game refers to a situation whereby the sum of the gains and losses of participants do not equal 0. In other words, both parties can gain from the interaction. Hence both participants can be winners.

<sup>14</sup> In game theory, a zero sum game refers to a situation whereby the sum of the gains and losses of participants is equal to 0. This means that one party's gains are exactly matched by another party's losses. Hence, there must be a winner and a loser.

<sup>15</sup> Dina A. Zinnes, "Constructing Political Logic: The Democratic Peace Puzzle," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48 (2004): 432-441.



implies, as mentioned above, that a dyad of states sharing a common form of democratic government will not engage in MIDs. The macro implication is more interesting, implying that peace and stability in the world system is dependent on the proportion of democratic to non-democratic states within the system as follows:

Let:

N = the number of states in the international system

M = the number of non democratic states in the international system

T = threat level in terms of MIDs within the international system

$$T = (M[N - M] + M[M - 1])/2$$

Accordingly, if  $M = 0$ , then  $T = 0$ , implying that if all states within the system are democratic, then there would be no threat of war.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, the lower the  $M / N$  ratio, the lower the threat of war. At face value, this theory mounts a strong defence against one of the most prominent criticisms of the theory; the historical inconsistencies.<sup>17</sup> After all, most of the historical contradictions cited by critics have taken place before the Cold War, when the number of democratic states in the system was much smaller, i.e. the  $M / N$  ratio was relatively high.

Though it succeeds in addressing the historical contradictions, the static model is vulnerable in that it is unable to empirically prove a causal link between

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 448.

<sup>17</sup> Rosato, "The Flawed Logic of the Democratic Peace Theory," 589.



democracy and peace; rather, it is only successful in establishing a mere correlation. This stems from the fact that modern democracies also consistently possess other variables such as modernity and developed economies, which have been hypothesized themselves to create mutually pacifistic state characteristics and in turn reduce the likelihood of MID.s.<sup>18</sup> Though this presents a difficulty, the definitional issue brought forth by Schwartz and Skinner in regards to the criteria used to define a democracy, specifically that democracy can be objectively measured in degrees (i.e. a state can be a perfect democracy or only somewhat a democracy) is what ultimately tears down the static model.<sup>19</sup> The static propositional calculus methodology is inherently flawed in that by definition it fails to take into account internal characteristics of its units of analysis. In order to do so, the model would have to introduce an additional  $\beta$  variable<sup>20</sup> where ( $0 \leq \beta \leq 1$ ) to measure the intensity of its propositions i.e. differentiate between perfect democracies and those that are only somewhat democracies. This is one of the crucial methodological and empirical gaps in the literature surrounding the democratic peace theory. Proponents of the theory tend to mistakenly treat democracy as a dichotomous variable (i.e. a state either is or is not a democracy); whereas a strong case can be made through which the democratic characteristics of a democracy can be measured. By employing a

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<sup>18</sup> Gat, "The Democratic Peace Theory Reframed: The Impact of Modernity," 73-100.

<sup>19</sup> Schwartz and Skinner, "The Myth of the Democratic Peace," 159-172.

<sup>20</sup> Generally in economics and game theory the  $\beta$  variable serves as a measure of intensity. In this context, for the purpose of empirical research, a "perfect democracy" would have a  $\beta$  value close to 1, whereas a state that just barely qualifies as a democracy would have  $\beta$  value close to 0.



clear and concrete definition of democracy, as proposed by critics, future empirical research can establish a  $\beta$  value for various states, which would yield more empirically relevant results.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, using the vague definitions of the theory's proponents would be quite problematic. After all, measuring "liberal ideas" or "liberalism" would be an empirical nightmare, and proponents can always argue that contradictory evidence involving MIDs between a dyad of democracies can be explained away by one of the states not being "liberal" enough and hence a non-democracy, without being subject to objective measurements.

The second model is dynamic in nature, in that it introduces a new variable of time as an essential element of analysis.<sup>22</sup> Proponents argue that the likelihood a MID between a dyad of states at time  $t + 1$  is dependent on the state of affairs at time  $t$  with the inter-temporal variations being due to the fact that actors learn from positive experiences. According to Cederman, "in our context, the argument assumes that pacific relations generate benefits in terms of wealth and security that gradually will be factored into the decision-making calculus of those states capable of learning".<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, the model is based on two crucial assumptions: "first, learning implies behavioural modification over time.

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<sup>21</sup> The concrete definition must be used because it defines key measurable characteristics of a democracy such as rule of law, equality before the law, and competitive elections. These variables can be empirically measured with a methodology similar to that of the democracy index developed by the Economist Intelligence Unit. The data can then be extrapolated to assign a  $\beta$  value for every participating country.

<sup>22</sup> Lars E. Cederman, "Back to Kant: Reinterpreting the Democratic Peace as a Macrohistorical Learning Process," *The American Political Science Review* 95 (2001): 12-31.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.



Second, at least in the long run, there should be a differentiation between inter-democratic relations and all other exchanges.<sup>24</sup> The model, based on the classical stochastic model of Bush and Mosteller,<sup>25</sup> is constructed as follows:

Let:

$\Pi_t$  = probability of engaging in MIDs in period  $t$

$\Pi_{t+1}$  = probability of engaging in MIDs in period  $t + 1$

$C$  = coefficient of learning,<sup>26</sup>  $0 \leq C \leq 1$

$\Pi_{t+1} = (1 - C)\Pi_t$

At first glance, this model provides a strong defence against critics. The historical inconsistencies can be explained away by the dynamics of the model, as it only makes sense for MIDs to take place between early democracies. However, due to a positive learning coefficient, the tendencies for MIDs are reduced as time passes, and indeed this has been the observed trend.<sup>27</sup> The weakness of the model lies in the empirical gap in proving that  $C$  is indeed a function of democracy. Though between mutual democracies the likelihood of

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>25</sup> Robert R. Bush & Frederick Mosteller, *Stochastic Models for Learning* (New York: Wiley, 1955), 1-365.

<sup>26</sup> In this context, the  $C$  coefficient refers to a factor that determines how much positive learning is taking place in a given period. The underlying assumption is that for a dyad of democracies, the  $C$  value will be high, causing the likelihood of MIDs to decrease drastically from period to period. For non-democratic states, the  $C$  value will be much smaller or even negative, resulting in a much slower process, or even, if negative, increasing the likelihood of MIDs from period to period.

<sup>27</sup> Cederman & Rao, "Exploring the Dynamics of the Democratic Peace," 824.



MIDs has indeed gone down significantly, the assumption by Cederman and Rao that the reduction of MIDs is due to the effects of democracy is in line with the constant theme of the literature; proponents consistently confuse correlation with causation.<sup>28</sup> What's more, the model doesn't account for why the likelihood of MIDs for democratic and non-democratic states alike have fallen sharply. Alternative explanations are many, for example, according to Gat: "the modern transformation accounts for the fact that not only liberal/democratic countries but all countries, once swept by the industrial-technological age, engaged in war far less than they previously did, a fact overlooked by the democratic peace theorists".<sup>29</sup>

Whether it is the static or the dynamic conceptualizations, the crucial methodological and empirical gaps in the literature arise from definitional inconsistencies and an inability to isolate the democracy variable.<sup>30</sup> I hypothesize that by re-conceptualizing democracy as a measurable non-dichotomous variable, we could take potentially crucial steps to fill these gaps. Firstly, in order to achieve empirically relevant data, democracy must be defined clearly and objectively. Though proponents may argue that this conceptualization does not take into account the "liberalism" of a state, defining democracy along such arbitrary lines with such vague concepts makes the theory "vacuous: there can

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 823-824.

<sup>29</sup> Gat, "The Democratic Peace Theory Reframed: The Impact of Modernity," 98.

<sup>30</sup> As previously mentioned, this difficulty stems from the fact that democracies tend to also be economically developed, modern and culturally similar. For that reason when observing a correlation between democracy and a reduction in MIDs, we're also observing a correlation between a reduction in MIDs and the aforementioned variables.



be no disconfirming evidence, but for that very reason there also can be no confirming evidence".<sup>31</sup> From the described objective definition, I propose developing the aforementioned  $\beta$  variable as a measure of democracy. This new dimension would be a potentially crucial addition to the literature by allowing for the separation of the democracy variable from other independent variables.<sup>32</sup> The consequences for the existing literature would be rather interesting. The static model would have to move to an increasingly complex game theory model and explore the internal characteristics of its variables. The consequences for the dynamic model are much more exiting. If the data were to show that the learning coefficient and the inter-temporal reduction in likelihood of MIDs is independent of the  $\beta$  variable, then there would be sufficient grounds to conclude that the observed correlation is caused by another independent variable. However, if the opposite were shown to be true (i.e. a dyad with high  $\beta$  values has a higher learning coefficient), then we could reliably conclude that democracy is indeed the crucial factor which reduces MIDs. From this point we could potentially dissect and reconstruct the learning coefficient as a function of  $\beta$ . For example, in a dyad of two democratic states:

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<sup>31</sup> Schwartz and Skinner, "The Myth of the Democratic Peace," 161.

<sup>32</sup> If the empirical data were to show that states with a high  $\beta$  (almost perfect democracies) and states with a low  $\beta$  (barely democracies) were just as likely as any other dyad of democracies to experience a reduction in MIDs, then we could safely conclude that it is another independent variable and not democracy which causes this reduction. On the other hand, if only dyads of states with high  $\beta$  values experienced a reduction in MIDs, then the democratic characteristics of those states may indeed be the crucial factor.



Let:

D1 = state 1,  $\beta_1$  = level of democracy in state 1

D2 = state 2,  $\beta_2$  = level of democracy in state 2

$C(\beta_1, \beta_2) = \beta_1 \times \beta_2$

The 20<sup>th</sup> century offers several potential case studies that would be quite useful in exploring the above hypothesis. In 1915, the idea of Germany, France and the United Kingdom in a political and economic union would have been laughable. Of course, the question is whether or not this diplomatic rapprochement was caused by the liberalization and democratization of institutions in these countries during the twentieth century. Elsewhere in the Middle East, the region's three great democracies (Turkey, Lebanon and Israel) have generally avoided large scale war. Turkey and Israel maintained good relations throughout the late twentieth century, and Lebanon, despite significant pressure, did not participate in the wars of 1967 and 1973. However, by 2012, relations between Turkey and Israel have largely deteriorated, and as recently as 2006 Hezbollah and Israel had engaged in a month long war. Has this deterioration in relations been due to de-liberalization or the weakening of democratic institutions? Perhaps there are other more complex variables at play? By studying the evolution of democratic institutions in these countries, and observing the evolution of diplomatic relations, these case studies promise to provide some invaluable insights into the viability of the democratic peace.

In conclusion, the proposed research hypothesis could build on the literature by potentially strengthening existing theories. Empirically isolating the



democracy variable would be a crucial step towards either proving or disproving its causation. On the other hand, the possibility arises that it will instead weaken the theoretical underpinnings of the democratic peace, prompting increased research into other independent variables. The research can potentially have an impact on International Studies as a whole, prompting either increased interest in the normative and institutional characteristics of a democracy as means of promoting peace and stability, should the theory be strengthened, or perhaps accepting the plurality of governmental systems as an equally valid model for peace, should the theory be weakened.



## **Legitimacy and American Declinism: A Nonstandard Approach to a Platitudinous Debate**

*Légitimité et déclin américain: Une approche non conventionnelle à un débat  
traditionnel*

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**Abstract:** Ways of looking at the possible decline of the United States are not necessarily quantifiable and speak of an immaterial aspect to shifts of power that seems to be ignored by the mainstream theories. It may be that the US is declining in overall power, economic power, political power, or cultural power, but there is also evidence that suggests that it may not be. The concept of who is *perceived* to have *legitimate* power over another is an example of a lens that is not quantifiable. However the US seems to have largely held the legitimacy of a superpower until quite recently. This paper will look at legitimacy in general, American legitimacy in particular, and finally its perceived loss.

*Résumé: Certaines façons d'envisager le possible déclin des États-Unis ne sont pas nécessairement quantifiables, notamment en raison de l'aspect immatériel des relations de pouvoir généralement ignoré par les théories principales. Il est possible que les États-Unis connaissent un déclin de leur influence mondiale sur les plans économique, politique ou culturel, mais il existe également des preuves qui suggèrent le contraire. La perception d'avoir la légitimité d'agir est aussi difficilement quantifiable. Cependant, les États-Unis semblent avoir largement retenu leur légitimité de superpuissance jusqu'à tout récemment. Cet article examinera la légitimité en général, la légitimité américaine plus spécifiquement, et enfin la perception de son déclin.*



The state of the international system is in a perpetual cycle of change. Nonetheless, there are times when systemic shifts increase in scope. It is in one of these periods that we currently find ourselves. Traditional International Relations (IR) theorists hold that, at any given time, there is one overwhelming power that helps balance out other nations and provide stability--the hegemon. Traditional IR theorists have different conceptions of what occurs when the existing hegemon loses its power and succumbs to the rising aspirations of the newer global power, be it a war or peaceful transition. Such was the case when the United States became the global hegemon after the Second World War, when the great powers in Europe of the previous eras could not recover.<sup>1</sup>

Presently, mid-2012, the question of sustainability of American hegemony has arisen, perceived to be challenged by quickly developing states like Brazil and China. However, before we can say that there is a shift in the global hegemonic structure, we must first ask: what is the nature of American decline? Of course, this leads to many questions: is America truly in decline? The 2007-08 financial crisis and massive debt have certainly hurt America's economy, yet it continues to dominate economic policy and its corporations are still some of the biggest and most successful in the world. In terms of political dominance, America appears to remain at the highest echelon of the global power structure, despite its presence being disputed in the Middle East and indeed, around the rest of the world. Is it America's political clout that is in decline or its economic clout? Or, perhaps it is the American state as a whole that is on the fall, bringing with it the stability of the hegemonic structure. As such, from a neo-Gramscian

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<sup>1</sup> John G. Ikenberry, "American Power and the Empire of Capitalist Democracy," in *Empires, Systems, and States*, ed. Michael Cox et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 191-212.; Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, "The Sources of American Legitimacy," *Foreign Affairs* 83, (2004), 20.



perspective, it is its cultural clout that is in decline? If this is to be, what nation will be the next global force? China's rise and economic success seem to lead to fears that China is actively trying to seize power from the United States. Such an action would have grand implications for the overall structure and principles of the system. China is not held to be an example of democracy or liberal free trade markets. However, the current and most mainstream debate is missing the immaterial, but key, element of *legitimacy*.

Legitimacy is a hard process to define and identify, with numerous definitions of what it is and how it is achieved and maintained. The general observation within the literature consulted is that it very much depends on perception: how a company, state, or individual, is perceived to be legitimate. This is not something that is quantifiable, as it deals with the rightness of someone or something to wield power over others--a phrase that is reminiscent of Enlightenment and early 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophy, more so than current scholarly practices.<sup>2</sup>

In previous eras, the country with most military strength could essentially intimidate other nations into actions that would come better in line with the interests of the dominant state, and could coerce them into allying with it and thus prevent other states banding against its power.<sup>3</sup> The unit of analysis in this paper is the United States, with its rise in the post-1945 era, a time when European powers could no longer hold on to their discontented colonies and had dragged many parts of the world into two massive wars and countless conflicts. The United States, aside from being a strong military presence, can be said to have had a legitimacy in the way it wielded power--it

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<sup>2</sup> Kenneth Allan, "Authority and Rationality - Max Weber (German, 1864-1930)," in *Explorations in Classical Sociological Theory: Seeing the Social World* (London: SAGE Publications Inc., 2005), 152.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Kagan, "America's Crisis of Legitimacy," *Foreign Affairs* 83, 6 (2004), 68.; Ikenberry, *American Power*, 193.



was not Europe that had been colonizing the globe and it acted within accepted international and moral norms. The United States, for the most part, appeared as a benign world power that was capable of bringing stability.

What, then, is the link between American decline and legitimacy? It is a particular kind of legitimacy that is declining for the United States, a power that is no longer implicitly accepted, domestically and internationally. The hegemony of a super power that has largely been seen as benevolent and necessary since the end of the Second World War is no longer accepted as such. Beginning with the global shifts at the end of the Cold War, the end of the USSR, the decline of communism and subsequent increased rise of capitalism, the United States was no longer needed to be the power that stood against the Soviet Union. In addition, the Neo-Conservative foreign policy of the Bush administration has been detrimental to this perception of legitimacy as it can be said to have been belligerent, which largely alienated the United States from its allies and other nations. In addition, it should be mentioned that the cost of the two wars in Afghanistan and Iraq did not help its economy stability.

The focus of this paper is to look at the perceived decline in American legitimacy, as opposed to the decline in its power, political power, or economic power--the legitimacy to wield this power and for it to be accepted by other states is what is deteriorating. First, I will look at legitimacy in general, then American legitimacy in particular, and finally at its descent.



## Legitimacy

First, a brief overview of aspects of legitimacy and how it is defined, generally, is of great importance to this study. Max Weber and Jürgen Habermas are two theorists that have looked at how something, especially a state, would garner legitimacy. Weber has focused on the different types of authority: charismatic, traditional, and rational-legal, with the United States falling into the category of rational-legal, as it garners its (domestic) legitimacy through the rule of law.<sup>4</sup> In addition, he has been attributed with theorizing that “legitimacy works only because people believe in the rightness of the system.” Habermas, however, has described legitimacy as being in accordance with what is true, right, and good, stating that societies are stable when their members perceive it to be legitimate.<sup>5</sup> This echoes one of the perspectives laid out by Ian Clark in his overview of legitimacy in international society, which will be discussed later.<sup>6</sup>

Moving to a slightly more contemporary view more of consequence to this essay, many theorists seem to keep to the view that legitimacy is partially garnered through law, perception, and the ability to bring stability to a system. Patrick Cottrell uses Ian Hurd’s definition that it is a “normative belief that a rule or institution should be obeyed.”<sup>7</sup> This shows that there is an element of coercion in legitimacy, albeit one that is implied and accepted. Furthermore, Cottrell states that in the context of institutions,

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<sup>4</sup> Allan, “Authority and Rationality - Max Weber,” 152.

<sup>5</sup> James Bohman and William Rehg, “Jürgen Habermas,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (2011), <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2011/entries/habermas/>>.

<sup>6</sup> Ian Clark, “Another ‘Double Movement’: The Great Transformation After the Cold War?” in *Empires, Systems, and States*, ed. Michael Cox et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 237-256.

<sup>7</sup> Hurd in Patrick Cottrell, “Hope or Hype? Legitimacy and U.S. Leadership in a Global Age,” *Foreign Affairs* 83, 2 (2011): 339.



legitimacy is based on how an actor perceives it, stating that legitimacy and power are complimentary.<sup>8</sup>

Yet another perspective, as formulated by Robert Tucker and David Hendrickson, posits that legitimacy is based on a state following the rule of law.<sup>9</sup> This must come from the “rightful authority” and must not “violate a legal or moral norm.” They too believe “legitimacy is rooted in opinion,” making illegal acts not necessarily illegal in all situations. This further emphasizes that notion that legitimacy is based in perception of the state that wields it. It is closely tied to accepted laws and norms, but does not have to remain strictly within the boundaries set by such rules.

Legitimacy, throughout the literature consulted, is seen as an important component of power that is based on perception, and that is furthermore not necessarily tied to law or morality, even though they are aspects important to consider when analysing the concept. It also holds an element of implied and accepted coercion, which we can link to empires or hegemonic characteristics, like those of the United States.

### **American Legitimacy**

Focusing on the particular case of American legitimacy, Tucker and Hendrickson construct four pillars that constitute the analytical framework, while John Ikenberry (2001) sees it as being rooted in institutions and the perception of the United States as

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 340.

<sup>9</sup> Tucker and Hendrickson, “Sources of American Legitimacy,” 18.



a reluctant super power, one that was prepared to “bind its own power in multilateral rules.”<sup>10</sup>

Contrarily, by following realist thought, Robert Kagan sees it rooted in the systemic legitimacy of a bipolar system.<sup>11</sup> However, the weakness of his argument is that he can only explain American legitimacy from a purely Western, and particularly Eurocentric perspective, not the legitimacy that was seen globally; with non-Western and non-European states more or less implicitly accepting America’s legitimacy as a super power.<sup>12</sup> Within Europe, it was believed that 1) only the United States was able to deter the power of the Soviet Union, 2) the USSR was a common ideological threat, and finally 3) there was the “structural legitimacy” garnered from a bipolar system, which meant that its power was automatically kept in check. Nevertheless, this does not explain why some Asian, African, and Middle Eastern nations accepted American legitimacy and influence even after the fall of the USSR. This perspective is useful in bringing attention the shift after the Cold War and the perceived necessity of the United States, which will be discussed further on.

Tucker and Hendrickson accept this aspect but believe that it goes further than Kagan’s reasoning.<sup>13</sup> The four pillars of American legitimacy begin with the post-1945 era, inevitably, and continue until the current state in which the Bush administration has placed it after its two invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, including the diplomatic and foreign relations behaviour surrounding them. The first pillar is the contribution to the creation of and adherence to international law, taking away the stipulations of conflict

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<sup>10</sup> Barry Buzan, “A Leader Without Followers? The U.S. In World Politics After Bush,” *International Politics* 45, 5 (2008): 555.

<sup>11</sup> Kagan, “America’s Crisis of Legitimacy,” 70.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>13</sup> Tucker and Hendrickson, “Sources of American Legitimacy,” 19-23.



perpetrated by realpolitik, such as the idea that the military victor is the final undisputed decision-maker. They point out that during the Cold War, the United States attempted to adhere to international laws and norms whenever possible, which contributed to their legitimacy. Furthermore, as they define the concept being rooted in opinion, not every break with international law that the United States committed has automatically been seen as illegal.

The second pillar is the American use of consensual decision making and multilateralism, wherein they took the interests of their allies into account. There was consultation, common policy, and compromise that may have even been facilitated by the American system (as Ikenberry calls it). Furthermore, Tucker and Hendrickson point out that the lowest point of American legitimacy in the post-1945 era was during the 1960s, when it pursued a policy of isolationism and unilateralism during the Vietnam War (similar to the Iraq invasion in 2003).

The third pillar describes the reputation that the United States earned for a policy of moderation, which stems from its choice to be an ‘unwilling super power,’ rather than follow an isolationist policy or exert its full power. Linked to this is the fourth pillar, which is an identification with the preservation of peace, “within the community of advanced industrialized democracies.”<sup>14</sup> This has led to the belief that American power is “necessary and rightful”, and therefore legitimate during the frigid period of the Cold War.

Moving on to John Ikenberry’s theory of American power and legitimacy, he takes a systemic approach that differs from that of Robert Kagan, stating that it was the

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 23.



institutionalization of American power that has kept balancing powers at bay, which Kagan's realist theory misses. Ikenberry sees American hegemony as being multifaceted and creating "a sort of primitive governance system" around the economic, monetary, technological and cultural aspects of the international order.<sup>15</sup> The global US-centric system constituted of the Bretton Woods institutions was created with American interests in mind during the post-1945. In this way, it is possible to conceive of a non-coercive American empire of democratic capitalism, which is based on reciprocity and makes it a benign and legitimate cost, according to John Gaddis.<sup>16</sup> The American system, which was created with the interest of advanced industrialized democracies at Bretton-Woods has spread over time, encompassing more nations than simply those advanced and industrialized. Indeed one could say that it has become the dominant system, especially after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Based on the characteristics of American unipolarity, Ikenberry finds that it has four dimensions of durability. The first is American power, which he sees as the glue of the system, maintaining it but not occupying an overt presence. The second dimension is the geographical location of the United States and its military, which is offshore and isolated. The third aspect is that of the institutions, which make it seem less threatening by restraining its power. This institutionalization means that it is hard for states to determine who truly holds the most power and influence over the system.<sup>17</sup> In this way, the "overtly coercive power of domination is muted," which contributes to the non-threatening nature of the American hegemony. This is described by Ikenberry as a "web

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<sup>15</sup> Ikenberry, "American Power," 191-192.

<sup>16</sup> John Gaddis in *Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 197.



of institutional relations--security, political, and economic--that the United States spun after World War II.” In addition, he claims that the United States “rose to power as an anti-colonial, post-imperial” presence, which would contribute to its perceived legitimacy in non-Western states.<sup>18</sup> This is where Kagan’s realist notion of the automatic legitimacy of the bipolar system shows its weakness. Not only did non-Western and non-industrialized states accept American legitimacy, but continued to do so after the end of the Cold War, which resulted in American unipolarity.

Finally, it is the domestic framework of the United States that contributes to its legitimacy, through the democratic and open principles that it follows, making it a ‘penetrated hegemony.’<sup>19</sup> The penetrated, or open, aspect of American hegemony blurs the distinction between domestic and international politics. This is focused around the institutions that the United States has largely created, based on the rule of law and predictability, contributing to stability in the ‘anarchic’ global system. According to Ikenberry, this allows for mutually beneficial relations or a type of trust, which in turns leads to legitimacy.

### **Decline in American Legitimacy**

The decline of American legitimacy as a super power is one that is hard to distinguish as it is based on perception, which is difficult to identify empirically. In addition, it may seem as if it is the economic or political power that is weakening. In fact, it has been American legitimacy that has been declining. This contributes to the perception all American power is incrementally diminishing. While there have been numerous

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 194.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 206.



episodes of American activity which have been perceived as illegitimate, one of the most damaging exertions of American power seems to have been the policies and actions of the Bush administration (2001-2009) in regards to the Iraq invasion in 2003, which had violated the principles of legitimacy laid out in this essay.

First, the four pillars of legitimacy described by Tucker and Hendrickson will be examined and an analysis will follow, describing how the pillars have not been adhered to by the most recent Bush administration.<sup>20</sup> The question of American legitimacy was already partially threatened at the end of the Cold War, with the United States no longer seen as necessary and automatically legitimate. This was exacerbated by the 2003 invasion of Iraq, which contravened the four pillars.

There was the perception that the United States was distorting international law to fit its interests, something that it had not done so overtly in the previous years since the post-1945 era (and its super power status) began. Shaw states that in the current international system, “‘authoritative deployment of violence’ is reinforced by its attachment to global symbols of legitimacy, such as the United Nations.”<sup>21</sup> The United States did not gain the consent of the Security Council, the body that legitimizes the use of force, and so the United States bypassed legitimate practices in two ways. First, it broke with its own principles of legitimacy, as laid out by Tucker and Hendrickson and, second, the United States violated internationally accepted norms of legitimacy *and* military force.

The pillar of committed multilateralism was almost entirely abandoned by the most recent Bush administration when it could not garner support for the invasion.

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<sup>20</sup> Tucker and Hendrickson, “Sources of American Legitimacy,” 23-28.

<sup>21</sup> Shaw in Clark, “Another ‘Double Movement’,” 253.



George W. Bush's rhetoric of "either you're with us or you are with the terrorists" served to distance American allies that did not support the invasion, such as France. Previously, Ikenberry notes an allowance for other states to air their interests and the United States would take them into account.<sup>22</sup> With the Iraq invasion, there were already questions circulating around the degree of its 'rightness' and yet the younger Bush administration pushed forward *and* alienated American allies.

Next, the identification with moderation was not adhered to as the United States entered into two wars between 2001 and 2003, not following a policy of isolationism or of restraint.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, this propensity for conflict undermined the fourth pillar of legitimacy, which was the apparent preservation of peace. Tucker and Hedrickson hold that the United States was afforded an understanding in the conflict with Afghanistan because of the events of September 11th, but when coupled with the invasion of Iraq, it was a worrying predicament.<sup>24</sup> This is especially true as the United States' claim to be 'intervening' in Iraq on the basis of human rights violations was largely seen as disingenuous.

Second, Ikenberry's theory of American power is looked at in the context of the 2003 Iraq invasion. Where there used to be a covert presence of power, the United States had used it overtly and coercively, no longer restraining it with institutions. The military, which had been isolated geographically and on bases located offshore, now took a central and highly visible role in two conflicts within a short period of time. These two conflicts, together, took away the third dimension of restraining its power. The

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<sup>22</sup> Ikenberry, "American Power," 206.

<sup>23</sup> Tucker and Hendrickson, "Sources of American Legitimacy," 24.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.



United States, as stated previously, did not bind itself to the resolutions of the Security Council, which made its moves seem threatening, with an imperialist tint. Though the UN and its bodies are often criticized, it is still perceived to have the power to legitimize the use of force, an avenue which the United States did not follow. This is especially damaging in the current system, which has a normative aversion to inter-state wars and imperialism, accepting force only in self-defence or in the defence of human rights violations on a massive scale. The nation of Iraq does not have a clean record when it comes to human rights violations, however it was not on such a massive scale as to warrant military intervention, unlike the case with 1991 Gulf war, when it had invaded Kuwait in its defence.

The fourth dimension of American penetrated and institutionalized hegemonic system no longer appears to be stable, which has two effects. First, the United States' legitimacy rested on the fact that it was perceived to be able to keep a stable system. The second result, following Watson, is that the American decline in legitimacy points to a larger crisis of legitimacy in the international order.<sup>25</sup> Clark states that legitimacy is a form of imperialism, an integral part of the "global distribution of power."<sup>26</sup> The American system of institutions is intricately and indubitably linked to the United States itself, and as such, whenever a crisis of legitimacy in the larger system rises, we can automatically perceive a decline in American *state* legitimacy.

Finally, Clark outlines three legitimizing principles of the international society: 1) multilateralism and a commitment to the global free market economy, 2) the

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<sup>25</sup> Watson in Clark, "Another 'Double Movement'," 248.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 253.



collectivization of security, and 3) the adherence to a set of liberal rights values.<sup>27</sup> The principles of legitimacy in international society echo the four pillars of American legitimacy laid out by Tucker and Hendrickson. In this way we see a link between American legitimacy, the American system, and its influence on the legitimizing principles of international society. The decline is explained at the state level, and not at a systemic level as Kagan claims, because it is the actions of the United States that has placed it in a circumstance of diminishing legitimacy. An example of this is the United States policy toward Russia, after the Cold War, which was a manifestation of the switch from covert to overt power that began in the early 1990s.

If we accept Watson's assertion that a break in practice with legitimacy creates tension, then we can say that the events of September 11th may have been a product of this tension or crisis of legitimacy that had begun in the post-Cold War era as a result of the increasingly overt power displays by the United States. The 2003 invasion of Iraq is therefore the most crucial blow to American legitimacy, and thus its power (in addition to the enormous economic cost of the war). Tucker and Hendrickson highlight the 'moral' aspect of neo-conservative foreign policy under the Bush administration, which added a secondary objective of spreading democracy, as a possible reason for beginning the conflict. Thus the Iraq invasion shows little strategic restraint and a coercive or overtly forced transition to democracy, taking away the label of a reluctant super power.

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 239.



American power resides in institutions, which produce “high levels of willing compliance” and the “ability to engage in strategic restraint”.<sup>28</sup> In his overview of legitimacy in international society, Ian Clark questions whether legitimacy is separate from power, or if it is simply the will of the hegemon. We can use Patrick Cottrell’s definition to answer this, as he posits that power and legitimacy are complimentary, yet simultaneously distinct, since legitimacy holds a certain element of coercion, becoming a form of power in itself.

In the case of the United States, its power came from its hegemonic position, however since this position was seen as legitimate and necessary during the Cold War (as an opposition to the Soviet Union) American power was legitimate, with all its elements of implied coercion. Robert Kagan’s realist theory can only claim that American legitimacy fell with the “Berlin Wall and Lenin’s statues,” as a result of the unipolarity that followed in the post-Cold War era.<sup>29</sup>

Finally, we can sum up legitimacy as being based in opinion and perception, as well as holding an element of trust. Because something is legitimate, it is trusted and assumed that it will act in such a way as to reward trust in its power. In return, there is a perceived element of stability if the system is seen as legitimate, based on opinion and in compliance with existing norms. It is understood that norms and laws may be violated on necessity and so public opinion allows for fluidity in defining what is legitimate. Within the context of the current global system there is an emphasis on the rule of law, multilateralism, and an aversion to outright inter-state conflict. Trust was placed in the United States, as the predominant super power and creator of many institutions, that it

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<sup>28</sup> Ikenberry in Clark, “Another ‘Double Movement’,” 251.

<sup>29</sup> Kagan, “America’s Crisis of Legitimacy,” 68.



would act in accordance to the accepted legitimate behaviour. However, with the Iraq invasion and the policies pursued by the Bush administration, the accepted behaviour and trust was violated by the United States, which has led to its decline in legitimacy as a welcome super power.

The importance of a decline in American legitimacy is tied specifically to its link with the American system. United States legitimacy was tied to the stability that it enhanced through its institutions to which it bounds itself. With the overt power that the United States began to employ in the post-Cold War era, a tension between accepted legitimacy and practice has occurred. This may have been a contributing factor to the September 11 attacks on the United States, and in response to a perceived illegitimacy throughout non-Western regions. The Bush administration's pursuit of unilateral foreign policy has exacerbated the crisis of legitimacy throughout the rest of the world and to the general legitimacy of the United States, as a welcome super power; with it is the question of the American system's legitimacy. The questioning of the systemic legitimacy shows that the tension between norms and practices has created an instability, which may continue and possibly foment further conflict throughout the globe, unless the importance of legitimacy is observed and understood. International Relations theory needs to take into account different ways of perceiving power, and incorporating its immaterial aspects. By broadening the scope of theories to include non-traditional approaches such as political theory, we can more easily analyse the shifts that take place in the international system and power structure with a more nuanced observation.



**Caribbean Dependency Theory and the Case of Jamaican Development**  
*La théorie de la dépendance dans les Caraïbes et le cas du développement en Jamaïque*

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**Abstract:** At the 50th year of Jamaican Independence, it is necessary to review the history of the state and question whether it and other Caribbean nations have truly achieved freedom since the time of colonization. Through an economic and socio-political analysis of the Caribbean Dependency Theory, it becomes obvious that the 'freedom' of the Jamaican people, and of the Caribbean region in general, has been a myth propagated by the dominant metropole states to sustain the economic domination put in place under the colonial powers. This domination has come to define and determine the future of the Caribbean hinterland states, which have found their economic systems trapped in a cycle of debt, accompanied by a decline in standards of living, Gross Domestic Product and savings.

*Résumé: Alors qu'on fête le cinquantième de l'indépendance jamaïcaine, nous nous devons de revoir l'histoire de cet État et de nous demander si la Jamaïque et les autres nations des Caraïbes ont réellement réalisé leur indépendance depuis la colonisation. Une analyse économique et socio-politique telle qu'offerte par la théorie de la dépendance dans les Caraïbes nous permettra de démontrer comment cette 'liberté' du peuple jamaïcain et de région des Caraïbes en général constitue un mythe utilisé par les États métropolitains dominants afin de maintenir les rapports de force économiques mis en place par les pouvoirs coloniaux. Cette forme de domination définit et détermine l'avenir des pays moins nantis des Caraïbes pour qui le système économique les emprisonne dans un cycle vicieux d'endettement et de déclin progressif des conditions de vie, du produit domestique brut et de l'épargne.*



With the emergence of 'independent' states in the Caribbean throughout the late 1900s, a change in the economic relations of hinterland and metropole states was expected. 'Freedom' meant the beginning of self-determination throughout the Caribbean. However, in reality, this did not occur. With decolonization came the 'concern' for the development of so called Third World states; those whose social, political, and economic structures were subjected to the domination of the advanced capitalist countries of the West and whose internal institutions continued reliance on international capital perpetuate the metropole-hinterland relationship.<sup>1</sup>

Though at the time of the Bretton Woods convention in 1944, the Caribbean states were still under the control of their respective imperial powers and thus had no position at the bargaining table, the system developed therein came to define and constrain them after decolonization. Though assistance was offered to these 'developing' states in the form of loans, grants and aid, it could not and cannot bring about development as that requires internal welfare-improving policies, designed to be hinterland-centric with the real goal of ending the dependent metropolitan-hinterland relationship and of truly emancipating these oppressed states from the system of domination. This emancipatory perspective was developed within the Caribbean states as a protest against both the economic metropole-hinterland relationship and the dominance in the discourse of core-centric understandings of development and argues for the necessity of a more inclusive understanding of the impact of development from the perspectives of developed countries.

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<sup>1</sup> B.R. Tomlinson, "What was the Third World?" *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, 2 (2003): 310-311.



Caribbean Dependency Theory (CDT) emerged at the University of the West Indies in the 1960s and became particularly influential as a critical analytical response to evolving neoliberal policies in the 1970s. CDT was directed at terminating the external controls over development imposed by institutions whose primary purpose was the enforcement of neocolonial structures.<sup>2</sup> Closely associated with the rise of ideological and political radicalization in the Anglophone Caribbean, the emergence of this theory occurred in response to “the influence of Rastafarianism, black power movements, the Cuban Revolution, national liberation movements in Africa and Asia, Marxism-Leninism, and Third World economic nationalism”.<sup>3</sup> Pioneered by a “new generation of Caribbean economists, loosely known as New World economists”<sup>4</sup> that challenged the prevailing discourse, CDT originated with Lloyd Best and Kari Polanyi Levitt who initially argued that the unique circumstances of the Caribbean require a separate theory to explain the functioning of their economies.<sup>5</sup> The theory they envisioned took place on two levels: Epistemic Dependency, which showed that the root of the Caribbean development problem lay in the reliance on “imported” concepts and theories of limited relevance to actual conditions in the region and Economic Dependency, the external controls which dominated and diminished the domestic economy of the Caribbean states, which will be the primary focus of this article.

The prevailing paradigms at the time of the New World economists genesis were those of Keynesian macroeconomics, neoclassical microeconomics and the ‘dual

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<sup>2</sup> Norman Girvan, “Caribbean Dependency Thought Revisited,” *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 27, 3 (2006): 328-352.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 339.

<sup>4</sup> Norman Girvan, “W.A. Lewis, The Plantation School and Dependency, An Interpretation,” *Social and Economic Studies* 54, 3 (2005): 20.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 211-212.



economy' development model of W. Arthur Lewis which all shared a representation of every economy as an independently functioning system in which markets operate through the interaction of supply and demand between "locally owned firms and resident consumers, and where the determinants of short-period economic activity and long-term growth are endogenous to the economy".<sup>6</sup> It was therefore assumed that the government could control the economy in the short-term by adjusting fiscal and monetary policy, in addition to policies to attract foreign capital to "supplement local savings and finance the level of investment needed for long-term growth".<sup>7</sup> The primary assumption of the three previously mentioned economic perspectives was that all states understood the concept of development in the same way, and would follow the same path in 'developing' as the developed states historically had. The rules of the game as understood by the emergent theorists were as such (though terminology varies slightly): *the muscovado bias* described the hinterlands confinement to terminal activity (it either produced primary goods or distributed consumer goods imported from the metropole); *The navigation provision* ensured that goods were transported by metropolitan carriers, and services were provided by metropolitan intermediaries; *the metropolitan exchange standard* specified that the banking system would be dominated by metropolitan financial intermediaries and ensured that the hinterland currency was fully backed by metropolitan assets.<sup>8</sup>

CDT argues through the Theory of Plantation Economy that, in essence, the structures put in place at the time of colonization (called Model I) have remained intact,

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<sup>6</sup> Girvan, "Caribbean Dependency Thought Revisited," 333.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 332.

<sup>8</sup> Lloyd Best and Kari Levitt, "Outline of a General Theory of Caribbean Economy," in *Essays on the Theory of Plantation Economy*, ed. Lloyd Best and Kari Levitt (Mona: University of the West Indies Press, 2009), 20.



and have in fact been upheld, by the metropolitan-hinterland relationship. According to Girvan, Best and Levitt, this initial relationship evolved first into Model II (where family-owned plantations replaced corporate plantations and a peasant class emerged) and then into the Model III Plantation Economy or Post-Emancipation and Contemporary system, which refers to the present situation in the Caribbean states,<sup>9</sup> where trading companies have been replaced with branches of multinational corporations to produce raw materials (i.e. bauxite in Jamaica), as well as staple food as exports to the metropole, ensuring the continued domination and 'underdevelopment' (defined loosely as the condition of low growth and sectoral imbalance)<sup>10</sup> of the Caribbean states.

During the process of decolonization, development became the watchword, the motivation for the economic and welfare improvement of impoverished states. In traditional discourse, development has been understood by the majority of metropole governments to be "synonymous with economic growth within the context of a free market international economy",<sup>11</sup> which in turn is necessary for combatting socio-economic issues. This mainstream understanding is predicated on the apparent triumph of economic liberalism, and has led to the promotion of these policies throughout 'developing' Caribbean states. A critical definition of development has emerged that argues for locally driven understandings of development and local control over the economy in order to facilitate economic growth and improve welfare internally,<sup>12</sup> which

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<sup>9</sup> Girvan, "Caribbean Dependency Thought Revisited," 336, Table 1.

<sup>10</sup> Marietta Morrissey, "Towards a Theory of West Indian Economic Development," *Latin American Perspectives*, 8, 1 (1981): 1-27

<sup>11</sup> Caroline Thomas, "Poverty, Development, and Hunger," in *The Globalization of World Politics*, ed. John Baylis et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 473.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 471-473.



was the approach originally developed by leading Caribbean Dependency theorists.<sup>13</sup> Though there is an obvious difference between development aid, loans and grants, CDT finds the distinction profits only the metropole and thus describes metropole-hinterland transfers of funds as mechanisms of control. The goal of Caribbean Dependency Theory is to build a theoretical framework in which economic policy can be devised to allow Caribbean states to assume control of their own development and growth in a manner which ensures that the needs of the Caribbean peoples are met and that promotes their interests within their own countries through economic policy which does not impede local production, education or health care services.<sup>14</sup> Thus, CDT would only support those humanitarian and economic aid programs which originated within the Caribbean, as these would be more directed at ending the dependence on the metropole; any programs or charities originating within the metropole, because they would not necessarily support the “specificity of the Caribbean experience,”<sup>15</sup> would be understood as a continued lack of control from within the hinterland economies.

Beginning in the 1970s, the standard prescriptions of neoliberal globalization were applied along with the assumption that hinterland states were simply metropole states that had not accumulated enough capital. As this does not take into consideration the Caribbean countries relationship with globalization, it has thus created a paradigm in which the experiences of the hinterland economies are disregarded.<sup>16</sup> Due to this externally sustained system, metropole states have gained compliance from Caribbean

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<sup>13</sup> Best and Levitt, “Outline of a General Theory of Caribbean Economy”.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Norman Girvan, “Plantation Economy in the Age of Globalization,” in *Essays on the Theory of Plantation Economy: A Development*, ed Lloyd Best and Kari Levitt (Mona: University of the West Indies Press, 2009), xvi.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., xvi-xxii.



governments through 'stick' methods such as economic sanctions and adjustment programs, or 'carrot methods' in the form of "promises or deliveries of benefits (economic aid, or trade preferences)".<sup>17</sup> According to Moon, these methods act as "consensus producing forces" on economic, political, social and cultural relations between the dependent nation and the global system and dominant nations (primarily the United States).<sup>18</sup> The dependent nature of the metropole-hinterland 'aid' relationship has also come to dominate the monetary system. The local currency of Caribbean states is tied to a metropolitan currency and the banking-system was controlled externally, leading Odle to characterize Caribbean public finances as exhibiting "fiscal dependence" due to reliance on foreign loans and grants<sup>19</sup>.

Capital influx, whether charity or grant, and policy intervention, whether loan or trade agreement, designed and operated by the metropole, is geared towards the continuation of the plantation economy structures, designed to perpetuate the hinterland dependence on the metropolitan at every level of interaction. The origins of CDT in the need for a Caribbean-centric economic policy provide an interesting basis from which to launch a case study. CDT argues, that capital in any form, coming from a metropole state or organization, is in fact a tool of the system of domination, thus it can have no positive effect on the 'legitimate development' of the Caribbean states. Instead, these adjustment programs, charitable giving's, and bilateral agreements, promote the very cycle that CDT theorists would argue keeps the Caribbean economy from long-term

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<sup>17</sup> Willian J. Biddle and John D. Stephens, "Dependent Development and Foreign Policy: The Case of Jamaica," *International Studies Quarterly* 33, 4 (1989): 413.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Girvan, "Caribbean Dependency Thought Revisited," 331



growth and the improvement of conditions internally. To analyze this more clearly, my unit of analysis will be the island of Jamaica.

Jamaica's economic development can be understood as a historically established metropole-hinterland interaction model, based in the colonial creation of power relations, whose theme of economic domination has continued throughout the state in the form of organizations that are in fact tools of the metropole states, of whom the primary goal is to reinforce the status quo exchanges. The purpose of this analysis, and the reason it is so important in understanding the current situation, is that it demonstrates that hinterland states, like Jamaica, are fundamentally different from the assumptions of metropole countries, thus requiring an alternative approach to development.

With Jamaica's withdrawal from the colonial system, via the West Indian labour rebellion of 1937-1938, Jamaica was granted a small level of democratic self-rule which expanded in scope (and included the establishment of a semi-autonomous political system) until full independence in 1962. As full independence was achieved, politics came to be dominated by two main political parties: the People's National Party (PNP), a more left-leaning party founded by Norman Manley, and the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) headed by Alexander Bustamante (the JLP under Bustamante won the first 'free' election with full suffrage, with 51% of votes).<sup>20</sup> Following the analysis of West Indian economist W.A. Lewis, the JLP government's policymakers pursued "industrialization by invitation" which consisted of import-substitution policies and the encouragement of foreign direct investment, as a means of liberalizing their economy and producing

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 417, Table 1.



competitively alongside the rest of the world.<sup>21</sup> Initially, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rose an average rate of 7% per year, and per capita income increased by 4.4% per annum from 1950-1970, allowing the JLP to win the 1967 election with 51% of the vote, as the short-term growth of Jamaica looked promising.<sup>22</sup> However, these policies only reinforced the metropole domination of the hinterland plantation economy; though GDP and GDP per capita were on the rise thanks to “industrialization by invitation”, the long-term effects of these policies on actual conditions within Jamaica were not anticipated.

At this point the distinction must be made between the national economy, which refers to the geographical area to which the gross domestic product is applied and is an economic extension of the metropolitan economy, and the domestic economy, which refers to the economy of the individuals in the country.<sup>23</sup> In the case of Jamaica, the national economy during the 1960s and 1970s flourished under the administrations liberalizing, pro-Western policies, while the domestic economy suffered through increased social inequality and unemployment, driving segments of the workforce into ghettos.<sup>24</sup>

The increasing socioeconomic issues brought the PNP into power in 1972 under Michael Manley<sup>25</sup> which heralded a period of democratic socialism and regional solidarity, with the administration explicitly opposing dependent development in the country, accepting the structural dependency critique of the international economic

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 416-417.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 416.

<sup>23</sup> Girvan, “Plantation Economy in the Age of Globalization,” 19.

<sup>24</sup> Biddle and Stephens, “Dependent Development and Foreign Policy,” 419.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 417, Table 1.



system and its results in underdevelopment and subsequently made efforts to restructure the national economy and infrastructure.<sup>26</sup>

The most predominant of the Manley government's policies was the formation of an international bauxite producers' cartel, the International Bauxite Association (IBA) in early 1974, which resulted in a unilateral tax levy of 7.5% of the price, which yielded an estimated \$170-\$200 million in the period from January 1974 to March 1975 alone. Additionally the government negotiated 51% ownership in the companies involved solely in bauxite mining and persuaded other IBA member states to impose levies as well. The bauxite policy is an example of the Jamaican government asserting control over its foreign and national economic policy and is an example of true development as understood by Caribbean Dependency theorists. This move by the government of a Caribbean state to improve its revenues and terms of trade unilaterally in order to ensure its profit and (theoretically, in the long-term) create a national economy that would not be dependent on foreign aid and loans and is one of the ways in which the government could prioritize and establish the interests of the Jamaican people, while lessening its level of dependence and closing the gap (albeit slightly) between the metropole and the hinterland, as the broad goal of the policy was to wrest control of the bauxite industry from the controlling interests of the transnational corporations home states.<sup>27</sup>

Outside the capitalist state' sphere of influence, the government, as a result of increased revenues, "indicated its seriousness over redistribution of income by introducing new progressive tax laws" which focused on the wealthier portion of the

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 419-420.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 420-421.



population.<sup>28</sup> The administration's understanding of development as being internally borne led to deteriorating economic conditions in the country vis-à-vis the disapproval of the United States (as Jamaica developed a closer relationship with Cuba), declining tourism and rocky interactions with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).<sup>29</sup> These conditions, as well as Jamaica's historical development, led the Jamaican government to conclude that Jamaica could not sustain itself solely based on internal production and necessitated a return to banks and institutions for assistance.<sup>30</sup> The IMF responded to this request for help by offering loans and conditioning acceptance on a set of austerity measures for the country; changes to fiscal and monetary policy, that would 'correct' the Jamaican system and make their exports more appealing, as increased production was presumed to generate growth in an economy. Manley refused to adopt these conditions, but continued social discontent and outbursts of violence marred the elections, in which Manley's PNP government was replaced by Edward Seaga's JLP in 1980.<sup>31</sup> The far more conservative JLP moved to implement IMF policy, and over the next four years Jamaica was subjected to the deterioration of social services, rising inflation, a slowed economy and increasing unemployment.<sup>32</sup> After the Seaga government initially implemented new conservative IMF requirements, GDP per capita declined<sup>33</sup>, savings

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 420-423.

<sup>29</sup> The Jamaica Gleaner, "Snapshots of History - Difficult Times in the 1970s," *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 2000, accessed March 1, 2012, <<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20010715/out/out2.html>>.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.; D. K. Duncan, "Winning is (Not) Everything," *The Jamaica Gleaner*, August 26, 2003, accessed March 5, 2012, <<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20030826/cleisure/cleisure4.html>>.

<sup>32</sup> J. Johnston and J. A. Montecino, "Jamaica: Macroeconomic Policy, Debt and the IMF," *Washington: Center for Economic and Policy Research* (2011): 1-19

<sup>33</sup> World Bank, GDP per capita growth table (annual %), accessed February 16, 2012, <<http://data.worldbank.org/country/jamaica>>



as percent of GDP improved for approximately two years before falling rapidly,<sup>34</sup> and 'aid' flows skyrocketed from \$150 million to over \$250 million,<sup>35</sup> as the country was unable to finance its own existence.

Over the next two decades the situation swiftly deteriorated, as a direct result of these policies. Subsequent governments, the second Manley administration (1989-1992) and the following PNP administration under P.J. Paterson (1992-2006), had little choice but to continue the acceptance of loans, grants and 'development aid' as their means for developing internal structures to allow Jamaica to sustain its own economic growth were hindered by its history of dependence on the metropole (and its affiliate organizations and institutions) and were further exacerbated by growing public debt. "Beginning in 1991 with the signing of a Structural Adjustment Package with the IMF, Jamaica undertook a rapid process of financial liberalization"<sup>36</sup> which amplified previous social issues with the loan being conditional on the reduction of social programs and the resultant lagging state regulations (as the structural adjustments were not a product of Jamaican innovation) lead to widespread bankruptcies in the financial sector by 1994.<sup>37</sup> Since then, public debt, which has crippled the economy and ensures there is no exit from IMF packages and aid, has increased dramatically. In 2000, it had reached a high of 80% of GDP.<sup>38</sup> By 2006, Jamaica's savings, a good indicator of the actual condition

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<sup>34</sup> World Bank, Gross Savings (% of GDP), accessed February 16, 2012, <<http://data.worldbank.org/country/jamaica>>

<sup>35</sup> World Bank, Aid Flows at Current US\$, accessed March 9, 2012, <<http://data.worldbank.org/country/jamaica>>

<sup>36</sup> Johnston and Montecino, "Jamaica: Macroeconomic Policy, Debt and the IMF", 5.

<sup>37</sup> D. King and A. Kiddoe, "Achieving Fiscal Sustainability in Jamaica: The JDX and Beyond," *Caribbean Policy Research Institute* (2010)

<sup>38</sup> Inter-American Development Bank, Totally Public Debt: % of GDP (Annual Average), accessed March 2, 2012, < <http://www.iadb.org/Research/LatinMacroWatch/lmw.cfm>>



on the ground in the country, had dropped to the lowest level since 1975,<sup>39</sup> its GDP per capita growth was negative.<sup>40</sup> and its public debt had reached an astonishing 111% of GDP.<sup>41</sup> On shaky economic ground already, the global economic recession hit Jamaica particularly hard, with its currency depreciating by nearly 20% from September 2008 to February 2009,<sup>42</sup> forcing it into another round of IMF loans and dependence on foreign assistance, as the governments efforts to finance its own recovery were simply too small to counteract the large shocks to the system.

Recently, Jamaica's situation continues to deteriorate; in 2010, Jamaica's public debt was on the rise again,<sup>43</sup> and the IMF has essentially taken full control over the country. Even after the negative shock of Tropical Storm Nicole (fall 2010), and despite GDP growth registering as negative for that fiscal year, Jamaica was not eligible for relief under the World Bank-administered Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF)<sup>44</sup> and "was only allowed to increase spending by 0.2% of GDP".<sup>45</sup> The IMF program put in place in the aftermath of the global recession focused on pro-cyclical policies which limited government spending particularly on tourism, where the government was *forced* to halve the \$10 million planned for an advertising campaign to attract foreigners to the country in order to meet IMF stipulations ,and the containment of the wage bill (the total of the wages an employer has to pay its employees) which directly impacts unemployment and national economic sustainability and can have negative consequences for a developing country like Jamaica whose health and

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<sup>39</sup> World Bank, Savings (% of GDP), 2012.

<sup>40</sup> World Bank, GDP per Capital Growth (annual %), 2012.

<sup>41</sup> Inter-American Development Bank, Total Public Debt: % of GDP (Annual Average), 2012

<sup>42</sup> Johnston and Montecino, "Jamaica: Macroeconomic Policy, Debt and the IMF," 10.

<sup>43</sup> Inter-American Development Bank, Public Debt: % of GDP (Annual Average), 2012.

<sup>44</sup> Johnston and Montecino, "Jamaica: Macroeconomic Policy, Debt and the IMF," 13-14.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.



education sectors were in dire need of financing.<sup>46</sup> The IADB stepped in at this point to provide ‘aid’ for social programs in the country to the tune of \$50 million, resulting in an increase in the official government poverty rate (from 10% in 2007 to 16% in 2009). When the current ‘development aid’ money runs out, Jamaica will be in no better of a position to drive its own economy internally and could even be positioned to take an even larger loan to finance whatever projects it may have put in place as a result of the ‘development aid’, or be forced to cut programs causing increased socio-economic tensions. This understanding of ‘development aid’ is the reason for \$100 billion worth of aid from the European Union to Jamaica since 1975<sup>47</sup> and \$9.5 million UNDP grant to aid poverty reduction from its largest trading partner, the United States, earlier this year.<sup>48</sup> Although these grants claim to have assisted the conditions on the ground in Jamaica, the fundamental problem and issue of concern for CDT scholars is that this ‘aid’ essentially perpetuates the metropole-hinterland cycle, because Jamaica is kept on a steady diet of external assistance and cannot develop the internal dynamic necessary to sustain itself. It is dependent on both ‘development aid’ in the form of grants and ‘development aid’ in the sense of loans, particularly considering the fact that oftentimes the conditions of the loans limit how the government can allocate the money received from grants.

As CDT scholars have shown, development is not measured only in capital, but requires the evolution of an internal dynamic, not only of physical structures and institutions, but a shift in the dominant discourse to emphasize that what is needed is

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 12-16.

<sup>47</sup> Patrick Foster, “EU aid to Jamaica tops \$100 billion,” *Jamaica Observer*, February 23, 2010, accessed March 1, 2012, <<http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/EU-aid-to-Jamaica-tops-100-trillion>>.

<sup>48</sup> Allan Brooks, “U.S. \$9.5 Million Grant for Five-Year Plan of Action Programme,” *Jamaica Information Service*, January 31, 2012, accessed March 1, 2012, <<http://www.jis.gov.jm/news/leads-104/29697>>.



not the charity of the Developed World, but the rise of the 'developing' World on its own steam, by its own hand, which is what is fundamentally missing in the case of Jamaica. The IMF (and other international institutional) loans are a direct perpetuation of this cycle, with grants loans and aid only serving the improvement of structures that assist or promote metropolitan values, interests and industries. As such, the entire system serves as a tool to keep Jamaica, and other Caribbean nations, dependent on external injections of capital. These tools play an incredibly significant role in Jamaican politics, and their prevalence and power is a direct result of metropole states investing in the country and providing 'aid' for the national economy whilst neglecting the need for growth in the domestic economy. Jamaica is a disturbing example of the real effects of massive public debt and reliance on 'development aid' and foreign loans. A country which prioritizes the interests of metropole creditors and institutions over the needs of its own society because it has been locked into a pro-cyclical pattern of underdevelopment, Jamaica can find no relief from these Western-oriented policies, unless it turns its gaze inwards and develops economic policies independent of exterior motives. Although 'assistance' was offered to Jamaica in particular, and developing Caribbean states in general, development aid as the metropole understands it cannot be about true development, as it must take into consideration the needs and interests of the Caribbean peoples, and focus on internal welfare-improving policies that are designed to be Caribbean-centric with the short and long-term goal of ending the dependent metropolitan-hinterland relationship in order to emancipate these oppressed states from the historically embedded and enforced system of domination.



## **Globalization, Migration, and (Under)Development?** Mondialisation, migrations et (sous)développement?

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**Abstract:** This paper will provide a general overview of the effects of globalization on migration and analyze the role of remittances in Mexican development. Much of my research suggests that remittances have positive influences on development: for example, it makes up for inadequate government spending on infrastructure, increases investment capital and improves literacy rates. However, it is also possible that remittances negatively impact development because it can reduce the incentive to work, induce mass migration, and lead to a brain drain that produces labour shortages. Remittances have indeed played a key role in development; however, there is still disagreement on whether the effects of remittances are positive or negative. In the end, I am left to conclude remittances are a neutral tool that can result in both positive and negative consequences on development.

*Résumé: Cet article présente les effets de la mondialisation sur les migrations ainsi qu'une analyse du rôle des remises d'argent dans le développement du Mexique. Mon travail de recherche suggère que les remises d'argent ont une influence positive sur le développement. Par exemple, elles compensent pour les dépenses publiques inadéquates dans les projets d'infrastructure, elles augmentent le capital d'investissement et elles améliorent le taux d'alphabétisation. Cependant, les remises d'argent peuvent également avoir un impact négatif sur le développement, car elles peuvent diminuer l'incitation au travail, induire des migrations massives et entraîner une fuite des cerveaux, ce qui a pour résultat des pénuries de travail. Les remises d'argent ont bien joué un rôle clé dans le développement, mais leurs effets ne sont pas toujours clair. En fait, les remises d'argent constituent un outil neutre utilisé par divers individus à des fins productives ou non productives et ce, avec des effets soit positifs, soit négatifs.*



The movement of people around the world is deeply rooted in history; in fact, it took place even before the formation of the nation-state.<sup>1</sup> Migrating groups are classified under different categories, each of which has its own unique reasons for migration. *Why have people felt the need to migrate? Where do they go?* These questions are posed by scholars in their attempt to understand the causes and effects of migration. Through a wide-ranging analysis of migration trends, scholarship has demonstrated that the desire for economic benefits is a key factor that pushes people to migrate.<sup>2</sup> Globalization has had a profound impact on migration; these migrant workers, through remittances, have both positively and negatively influenced the development of their homeland. This essay will examine the effects of remittances by migrant workers on development in Mexico.

### **Globalization and Migration**

Globalization is a buzz word that constitutes a multitude of meanings. However, for the purposes of this essay I will specifically use it as it relates to aspects of migration. For example, this may include but is not limited to: technological innovations such as cheaper transportation costs, flows of capital and labour, and the divide between the rich and the poor. Held's idea of globalization is comprised of "stretched social relations, an intensification of flows, increasing

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen Castles. 2002. "Migration and Community Formation under Conditions of Globalization" *International Migration Review* 36(4): 1144.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1148.



interpenetration, and a global infrastructure.”<sup>3</sup> Based on his different perspectives of globalization, we see that while there may be immense benefits, sometimes it can also be associated with unequal economic and power relations as well as a disproportionate distribution of its effects. Positive globalists emphasize how stretched social relations can “improve the quality of life [and] raise living standards”<sup>4</sup> while pessimistic globalists focus on the negative aspects such as a hegemonic dominance of the most powerful states on the weaker ones leading to victimization of groups and individuals who are most vulnerable to its negative effects.

We can look at migration to demonstrate the realities of stretched social and economic relations. Patterns of capital flows have consequently resulted from these migrations, highlighting the change in economic interactions. Globalization also demonstrates a “complementary differentiation between different regions of the world due to their relationships to one another in terms of capital extraction. The movement of populations between them in response to labour markets [categorizes them] as either cores or peripheries of capital accumulation”.<sup>5</sup>

Castles identifies two assumptions of traditional migrations: 1) permanent settlement migration and 2) temporary labour migration. However, since the advent of globalization, these assumptions have been slowly eroded in the face

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<sup>3</sup> Cochrane Allan and Kathy Pain. 2004. "A Globalizing Society?" in David Held, ed. *A Globalizing World: Culture, Economics, Politics*. New York: Routledge, 17.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>5</sup> Donald M. Nonini. 2005. "Diasporas and Globalization" in M. Ember, C. Ember and I. Skoggard, eds. *Encyclopedia of Diasporas: Immigrant and Refugee Cultures around the World*, Part II. New York: Springer, 566.



of new types of migrations. His description of low-skilled migrants that migrate in search of relatively better economic opportunities, usually coming under guest worker systems or illegally across borders,<sup>6</sup> who send remittances back to help support their families, serves as the focus of this essay to examine the impact on development in Mexico.

There has been much research done into the reasons why people migrate. Nonini attributes globalizations impact on migration to capital acquisition. By observing the uneven distribution of the effects of globalization he concludes that “contemporary labour and trade diasporas” migrate “from the peripheral regions of the world economy to its core regions of capital accumulation...”<sup>7</sup> and initiate the flow of capital in the form of remittances back home. Remittances are one of many methods that migrants use to reap the benefits of migration and “reaffirm the membership of the migrants in their homeland locals, and make possible the economic survival of poor families.”<sup>8</sup> The remittances have both microeconomic and macroeconomic effects on the home economy. For example, Nonini uses the example of microeconomic implications in the forms of increased construction of buildings and homes, increases in small businesses, and education funding. He supports his theory by showing the increased movement of people and commodities, and points to

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<sup>6</sup> Castles, op. cit., 1152.

<sup>7</sup> Nonini. op. cit., 566.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 568.



instances of goods remitted instead of money, including cultural items that help preserve migrants' cultural roots.<sup>9</sup>

Citing Hugo, Castles explains the main reason behind migration is due to the wealth of a state versus its population. Essentially, the countries with stable economies but low birth rates experience labour shortages, especially in the unskilled sector, that are met by migrant labour from countries with high birth rates and not enough jobs.<sup>10</sup> Neo-classical economic theory points to better economic opportunities in host countries that draw in migrants from economically poor countries.<sup>11</sup> The economics of migration theory sees migration as part of a collective strategy on the part of the family and community; they consider security, sustainability, remittances, and investment opportunities.<sup>12</sup> Historical-institutional approaches show how institutions such as corporations and states initiate recruitment of contract labour to meet their labour demands under guest worker systems.<sup>13</sup> All of these theoretical approaches can help to explain the case study of Mexican migrant workers in the United States of America.

### **Impact of Migrant Remittances on Development in Mexico**

Now that we have demonstrated that individuals and groups temporarily migrate to work and send remittances home to help their families, some may wonder at the effects of those remittances. It is obvious that remittances have affected

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Castles, op. cit., 1148.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 1150.



development; the question is whether that has been positive or negative. There is much support for both sides of the argument, depending on what is being measured and how the situation is perceived.

Much of my research suggests that remittances have positive influences on development, making up for inadequate government infrastructure. Migrant workers send home remittances so that their families can provide for themselves.<sup>14</sup>

Migrants have been sending money to their hometowns for decades... In 2005, remittances constituted...3% of GDP in Mexico...surpass[ing] even government spending in some localities. In the Mexican state of Guanajuato, which received \$652.30 million in remittances in 1996...remittance income was 14 times greater than federal social spending.<sup>15</sup>

Adida and Girod conducted a detailed micro and macro economic analysis of the impacts in Mexico and they found “that remittances increase investment, reduce poverty, improve school enrolment, reduce illiteracy ...reduce infant mortality, [and] develop local infrastructure.”<sup>16</sup> The authors analyzed 2,438 municipalities in Mexico and found that citizens had to take matters into their own hands in order to improve their living standards because oftentimes in developing countries the state is unable to provide adequate public services.<sup>17</sup> The majority of Mexican households gained access to clean water through indoor pipes or a communal tap and drained sewerage into “septic tanks, the public sewerage

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<sup>14</sup> Claire L. Adida and Desha M. Girod. 2001. “Do Migrants Improve Their Hometowns? Remittances and Access to Public Services in Mexico, 1995-2000” *Comparative Political Studies* 44(1): 3.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.



system, or bodies of water or by dumping it on public lands.”<sup>18</sup> If citizens forego government provisions, they can pay and build pipes to connect their homes to the government's public system to get water and also access adequate sanitation through the purchase of septic tanks.<sup>19</sup>

While noting that remittances could have positive, neutral or negative effects on development, Adida and Girod argue that it is likely to have positive effects “because citizens use remittances to develop the infrastructure privately in their homes.”<sup>20</sup> They used literacy rates as a measure of development, hypothesizing that wealthier municipalities' access to basic household needs would mean that an increase in literacy rates to positively affect the change in household access to clean water and sanitation.<sup>21</sup> Despite the seemingly positive effects of remittances on development in Mexico, I cannot completely agree with Adida and Girod that an increase in literacy rates would imply better access to clean water and sanitation until a more direct link between wealth, literacy rates, and access to household necessities were causally established.

A sceptical person would ask, is it possible that remittances negatively impact development because it reduces the incentive to work? I was intrigued by this argument and initial research supported this argument, including Airola's work on distinguishing the degree to which remittances affected household consumption through an analysis of expenditure patterns. He looked at what households spent their income on to infer whether or not people invested

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 12.



remittances into their households or squandered it on leisure activities or alcohol due to their reduced incentives to work.<sup>22</sup> Previous scholarship on remittances and development highlighted the negative impacts of remittances; the overwhelming conclusion was that households relying on remittances used their income for non-productive consumption and increased leisure.<sup>23</sup>

However, Airola then contrasted previous scholarship with his more current research, supporting himself with the work of Adams and Page that demonstrates “evidence that remittance income reduces poverty in developing countries.”<sup>24</sup> But this leads one to question whether reducing poverty equals to using remittance income productively? It is safe to assume that there would be a clear difference between spending patterns of households that receive remittance income versus ones that do not. Airola’s research demonstrates that remittance income received is used in productive ways,<sup>25</sup> further supported by Woodruff and Zenteno who found that “remittances are responsible for almost 20% of the capital invested in microenterprises in urban Mexico.”<sup>26</sup>

Through a detailed in-depth analysis, Massey and Parrado identify the significant investment in productive activities and underscore the importance of migrant remittances supporting Mexican economic development. Using Durand's term “migradollars,” they estimated that approximately \$1.95 billion US were sent

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<sup>22</sup> Jim Airola. 2007. “The Use of Remittance Income in Mexico” *International Migration Review* 41(4): 850.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 852.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 853.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 852.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 853.



back to Mexico in the form of remittances in 1988, the mean year of their study.<sup>27</sup> Alternatively, Massey and Parrado state that “the precise nature of that influence depends on how the dollars are spent.”<sup>28</sup> However, we can conclude through their research on migradollars that they have had a positive influence on the Mexican economy, “representing one of the country's largest sources of foreign exchange and an important source of its investment capital.”<sup>29</sup>

There are also many authors who argue that migrant remittances have had a considerably negative impact on development in Mexico. A huge issue is “the brain drain” that produces labour shortages, negatively impacting family and community life.<sup>30</sup> As well, “remittances could decrease access to water and sanitation because their appeal induces mass migration. In this case, remittances would be creating ghost towns where citizens and governments lack incentives to invest in local infrastructure.”<sup>31</sup>

I found Binford's use of both the structuralist and functionalist positions to contrast the difference in opinion regarding the relationship between migration and rural economic development in Mexico to be quite fascinating. The structuralists believe that remittances do not result in rural economic development while the functionalists argue the opposite. Initial structuralist scholarship was mainly oriented around dependency and world systems theory both of which highlighted the scepticism that remittances could lead to positive

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<sup>27</sup> Douglas S. Massey and Emilio Parrado. 1994. “Migradollars: The remittances and savings of Mexican migrants to the USA” *Population Research and Policy Review* 13: 23.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>30</sup> Castles, *op. cit.*, 1148.

<sup>31</sup> Adida and Girod, *op. cit.*, 9.



development, arguing that they instead “distorted rather than developed rural economies, exacerbating social conflict, economic differentiation and price inflation, and contributing to a vicious cycle in which migration begot more migration.”<sup>32</sup> For example, because the majority of Guadelupe's households were dependent on remittances, they became trapped “in a vicious cycle in which only migration provided the means for sustaining the very materially improved lifestyles that the remittances had made possible”.<sup>33</sup> Mines' Las Animas serves as an example to demonstrate how “international migration should be seen as a double edged sword - it allows Mexicans to achieve higher living standards, but also makes them dependent on continual access to the US for the maintenance of these standards.” Consequently, Mexican youth perceived migrant labour in the US as something that could elevate their family's economic status and so preferred to migrate there and work instead of going to school and planning for a future in Mexico, resulting in possible brain drain and labour shortages.<sup>34</sup>

There exist alternate interpretations of some of the data used to support positive remittance-on-development arguments. For example, Binford's critique of the functionalist position stems from his focus not on whether remittance income is productively invested into the local Mexican economy but rather looks at their frequency and duration of success.<sup>35</sup> He even gives an alternative interpretation of the data used in the article by Massey and Parrado. He agrees

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<sup>32</sup> Leigh Binford. 2003. “Migrant Remittances and (Under)Development in Mexico” *Critique of Anthropology* 23(3): 305.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 308.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 309.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 311.

that while they were correct in determining that remittances were being invested in productive activities, they weren't very exclusive in their qualifications of types of productive activities. He states that “about half the businesses...were in the retail sector, and most were small and generated little employment.”<sup>36</sup>

Binford highlights the discrepancy between definitions of investment that lead researchers Massey and Parrado to conclude that remittances can help development. He himself stressed a narrower definition, “...to distinguish between investment with the potential to yield some benefit - whether social, economic or even psychological - and a narrower conception of 'productive investment' that restricts investment to the purchase of means of production, raw materials and labour power, regardless of whether these are put to work producing use values... or commodities.”<sup>37</sup> Through his narrower definition, we can see that remittances do not contribute positively to Mexican development and only serves to produce a vicious cycle of migrant labour and minimal investment where relying on remittances is the only way to survive.

I found Latapi's argument compelling in that he takes a comprehensive approach, looking at the social, political, and economic context of migration before deciding whether or not it positively or negatively impacts development.<sup>38</sup> It is clear that there is a case of brain drain happening, fuelled by the lure of the lifestyle that remittances support.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 312.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 313.

<sup>38</sup> Agustin Escobar Latapi. 2009. “Can Migration Foster Development in Mexico? The Case of Poverty and Inequality” *International Migration* 47(5): 76.



Remittances are usually analysed as a positive financial flow akin to those derived from exports. They differ from these for three reasons, however. Most remittances are sent to families, not firms, are mostly used for subsistence, not production, and they imply the export of labour, as opposed to goods and services.<sup>39</sup>

Latapi looks at Mexican migrant-oriented policies and makes recommendations to lessen emigration and make efforts to increase the Mexican economy through returning migrants. This demonstrates that remittances do not, in fact, help to positively promote development.

## **Conclusion**

This essay has provided a general overview of the effects of globalization on migration and the role of remittances in Mexican development. Both Held's positive and negative globalists agree that globalization is something new that has significantly influenced the flow, intensity and reasons for migration. Through my research, we can see that there is consensus that something is indeed happening; remittances have played a key role in development. However, there is still disagreement on whether the effects of remittances are positive or negative. I am left to conclude remittances are a neutral tool that individuals can use towards productive or non-productive activities resulting in positive and negative effects on development.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 77.



## **Demanding Food Sovereignty: *La Vía Campesina* and the Global Food Movement**

*Exiger la souveraineté alimentaire: La Vía Campesina et le mouvement alimentaire mondial*

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**Abstract:** The global crises emerging from the current neoliberal capitalist system – including, but not limited to the global food crisis – have sparked a growing number of counter-movements, seeking systemic structural change and a shift away from market-centrism and profit maximization to a world wherein the wellbeing of community, humans, and the environment is championed. This paper argues that the global food movement, including what may be the largest social movement in the world, *La Vía Campesina*, is one such movement that has emerged from within civil society to tackle the problems arising from neoliberalism. By redefining basic humans rights (challenging the current discourse), including the adoption of the principle of food sovereignty, *La Vía Campesina* seeks to achieve broader social, cultural, economic, and political transformations, beginning from the ground up, and providing hope that another world is possible.

*Résumé:* Les crises mondiales qui émergent à même le système capitaliste néolibéral actuel - y compris, mais non limité à la crise alimentaire mondiale - ont suscité un nombre croissant de contre-mouvements. Ceux-ci demandent le changement structurel et systémique ainsi qu'un abandon du système centré sur le marché et la maximisation du profit dans un monde où le bien-être des communautés, des humains et de l'environnement est défendu. Cet article soutient que le mouvement alimentaire mondial, notamment ce qui est souvent perçu comme le plus grand mouvement social dans le monde *La Vía Campesina*, émerge au sein de la société civile pour répondre aux problèmes posés par le néolibéralisme. En redéfinissant les droits fondamentaux de la personne (contester le discours actuel), y compris l'adoption du principe de souveraineté alimentaire, *La Vía Campesina* cherche à atteindre de plus larges transformations sociales, culturelles, économiques et politiques, en commençant par le bas et procurant l'espoir qu'un autre monde est possible.



Food sovereignty describes food as a basic human right, insisting that all peoples have the right “to produce [their] own basic foods respecting cultural and productive diversity.”<sup>1</sup> This essay will examine the current food crisis, and the mobilization of a specific global food rights movement – *La Vía Campesina* – in response to policies of neoliberal capitalism that are partly (if not mostly) responsible for the crisis. I will argue that transnational movements such as *La Vía Campesina* have the potential to offer an alternate, more egalitarian system to that currently perpetuated and exacerbated by neoliberal capitalism, by redefining basic human rights (challenging the current discourse) and shifting away from the market-centrism of the current system to one where humans and nature are valued and respected. *La Vía Campesina* does just this with respect to considering food as a basic human right, and, together with other movements tackling contrasting issues, can form a network for another possible world. This essay will begin by briefly contextualizing the global food crisis within the current corporate food regime. I will then differentiate between food *security* and food *sovereignty*, the latter of which is pursued by the global food rights movement. Finally, I will examine the global food rights regime through *La Vía Campesina*, the “largest and most significant agricultural social movement in the world”.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Annette-Aurélien Desmarais, “The Vía Campesina: Consolidating an International Peasant and Farm Movement,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 29, 2 (2002): 104.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.



## The Current Food Crisis and the Corporate Food Regime

In the Declaration of Maputo, *La Vía Campesina* speaks to the convergence of several crises – food, climate, energy and financial – as originating out of neoliberal policies of deregulation, which champion large corporate interests and profits.<sup>3</sup> This has allowed transnational corporations to “take over land and natural assets [...] that translates into a privatizing war to steal the territories and assets of peasants and indigenous peoples”.<sup>4</sup> Giménez and Shattuck frame their analysis of the current global food crisis within the corporate food regime, which they claim is responsible for “a recent spike in both food prices and global hunger”.<sup>5</sup> McMichael adds that the rise in food prices and the food rioting that ensued has turned the public (and academic) eye toward the foundations of our current agricultural and food system, along with its dependence on fossil fuels.<sup>6</sup>

In order to understand the current global food crisis, one must first characterize the current corporate food regime, which, driven by neoliberalism, is centered on the market (monopolies) and maximization of profits. Neoliberalism has led to mass corporatization, meaning increasing concentration of land ownership in the hands of a few transnational corporations (TNCs), the genetic modification and patenting of organic materials, as well as the depletion of

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<sup>3</sup> Peter Rosset, “Agrofuels, Food Sovereignty, and the Contemporary Food Crisis,” *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society* 29, 3 (2009): 189.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Eric Holt Giménez and Annie Shattuck, “Food Crises, Food Regimes and Food Movements: Rumbblings of Reform or Tides of Transformation?” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 38, 1 (2011): 110.

<sup>6</sup> Philip McMichael, “A Food Regime Genealogy,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 36, 1 (2009): 139.



natural resources worldwide.<sup>7</sup> The paradox of the current global food crisis, which is said to have begun in 2008, is that hunger rose to record levels, while “the world’s major agrifoods corporations” received “record global harvests as well as record profits”.<sup>8</sup> This demonstrates the system of inequality perpetuated by neoliberal capitalism: while claiming its policies are good for the world because of unprecedented amounts of wealth, the system fails to mention that there is an increasing inequality gap along with a decrease in the standard of living of most of the world’s population.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, the response of big agribusiness to the massive food riots that followed was to propose increased implementation of tactics championed by neoliberal capitalism, a system that is in part (if not mostly) responsible for the crisis in the first place. These tactics include “more genetically modified crops, more biofuel crops, more ‘free’ trade”.<sup>10</sup> While these tactics would actually be detrimental to our health, the environment, and the global food system, mainstream media (perpetuating the current hegemonic system) “regurgitated these responses to the public, upholding the message that hunger could be solved through a one-size-fits-all approach of boosted agricultural production and quick market fixes”.<sup>11</sup> The global food movement was unwilling to accept these neoliberal approaches to ‘solving’ hunger, as they understood that it would simply perpetuate the current system of inequality and exploitation. As the food crisis is

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<sup>7</sup> Giménez and Shattuck, “Food Crises, Food Regimes and Food Movements,” 109.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>9</sup> Helmut Anheier, Marlies Glasius, and Mary Kaldor, “Introducing Global Civil Society,” in *Global Civil Society*, ed. Helmut Anheier et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 7.

<sup>10</sup> Christina Schiavoni, “The Global Struggle for Food Sovereignty: From Nyéléni to New York,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 36, 3 (2009): 682.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 682.



intertwined with the other global crises today, civil society groups (and some institutions and governments) have recognized the need for wider, systemic *structural* change – a social transformation.<sup>12</sup> As Wittman argues, “it is within this framework that food sovereignty has relevance”.<sup>13</sup>

### **Defining Food Sovereignty: Food as a Human Right**

Raj Patel explains that the concept of food sovereignty is somewhat ambiguous, due to the plethora of definitions that exist in today’s literature, some overlapping, some contradictory. He attempts to develop a more comprehensive definition by first contrasting it with the more traditional concept of *food security*.<sup>14</sup> Patel cites the UN Food and Agricultural Organization’s (FAO) 2001 definition of the latter as follows:

Food security [is] a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.<sup>15</sup>

This definition was formulated by politicians, activists and NGOs as an expansion from their original definition in 1974, which was concerned with “adequate world food supplies ... to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices”.<sup>16</sup> The latter definition, created purely by states without input from civil society, demonstrates the focus on political

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<sup>12</sup> Giménez and Shattuck, “Food Crises, Food Regimes and Food Movements,” 116.

<sup>13</sup> Hannah Wittman, “Interview: Paul Nicholson, La Vía Campesina,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 36, 3 (2009): 676.

<sup>14</sup> Raj Patel, “What does Food Sovereignty Look Like?” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 36, 3 (2009): 663.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, 664.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*



economy and the market, as befitted the 1970s and the expansion of neoliberal globalization. Patel argues that the world in the early 2000s was (and still is) dominated by US-style neoliberal capitalism, a system that has rendered institutions that fight world hunger, such as the FAO, “increasingly irrelevant and cosmetic in the decision making around hunger policy”.<sup>17</sup> Put differently, this reformulated definition, while more inclusive, holds very little (if any) power for enforcement. Driven by the market, the mechanisms of neoliberal capitalism are not concerned with people’s overall wellbeing (including access to food), if this pursuit conflicts with the maximization of profits.

Patel argues that despite the challenges brought about by this system, the move to include “a whole nexus of concerns around nutrition, social control and public health” in the expanded food security definition was largely due to *La Vía Campesina*’s promotion of the concept of *food sovereignty* during the 1996 World Food Summit.<sup>18</sup> Through this concept, it sought to “develop a comprehensive alternative proposal for restructuring food production and consumption at the local, national and global level”.<sup>19</sup> The movement believed that it was necessary to highlight states’ social and political responsibility to ensuring the food security of their people. Patel cites *La Vía Campesina* as follows:

Long-term food security depends on those who produce food and care for the natural environment. As the stewards of food producing resources we hold the following principles as the necessary foundation for achieving food security [...] Food is a basic human right. This right can only be realized in a system where food sovereignty is guaranteed. *Food sovereignty is the right of each*

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Patel, “What does Food Sovereignty Look Like?” 664-665.

<sup>19</sup> Rosset, “Agrofuels, Food Sovereignty, and the Contemporary Food Crisis,” 190.



*nation to maintain and develop its own capacity to produce its basic foods respecting cultural and productive diversity. We have the right to produce our own food in our own territory. Food sovereignty is a precondition to genuine food security.*<sup>20</sup>

This quote demonstrates the clear distinction from the 1974 definition of food security, and began a critical discussion about the relations of power with regard to the food system. They argue that food as a human right should be an extension of Article 25, Paragraph 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>21</sup>, and should include, not only the access to food, but also “the right of democratic control over food and food-producing resources”.<sup>22</sup> *La Vía Campesina* was also strategic in situating the call for food sovereignty within the human rights discourse, making it difficult for ‘liberal governments’ – built on principles of rights and democracy – to ignore.<sup>23</sup>

While the World Trade Organization (WTO) tends to use a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to ‘solving’ or addressing the food crisis, food sovereignty employs the exact opposite, claiming local adaptability, so that every area and people should have the right to determine how, where, and what they grow, so long as it does not infringe on those same rights afforded to others. In the case of the market, this allows countries control over their own policies regarding agriculture and food, as well as protecting their domestic markets, something which has become increasingly difficult for some countries due to the ‘free market’ and

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<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Patel, “What does Food Sovereignty Look Like?” 665.

<sup>21</sup> This paragraph states: “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, *including food*, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control”. United Nations. “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.” December 10, 1948. Accessed March 25, 2012. <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>. Emphasis Added.

<sup>22</sup> Giménez and Shattuck, “Food Crises, Food Regimes and Food Movements,” 128.

<sup>23</sup> Patel, “What does Food Sovereignty Look Like?” 665.



liberalization.<sup>24</sup>

Food sovereignty has been widely developed throughout the last decade, with many organizations and movements adopting and spreading its principles. Six guiding principles of food sovereignty were developed at the Nyéléni 2007 Forum for Food Sovereignty held in Sélingué, Mali, and attended by “over 500 social movement leaders from nearly 100 countries,” including representatives of, among others, *La Vía Campesina*, the World March of Women, the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers, Friends of the Earth International. These principles were: “Focuses on food for people; values food providers; localizes food systems; puts control locally; builds knowledge and skills; and, works with nature”.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, the related principle of agroecology has also been adopted by *La Vía Campesina* and other groups in the global food movement. This principle is based on sustainable agricultural practices that have “respect for and [are] in equilibrium with nature, local cultures, and traditional farming knowledge”.<sup>26</sup> Rosset argues that “ecological farming systems can be more productive, can better resist drought and other manifestations of climate change, and are more economically sustainable because they use less fossil fuel”.<sup>27</sup> On top of this, the methods advocated and employed by big corporations and agribusiness – such as monoculture production, the use of chemical pesticides, and GMOs (genetically modified organisms) – are detrimental to the environment and human

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<sup>24</sup> Rosset, “Agrofuels, Food Sovereignty, and the Contemporary Food Crisis,” 190; Schiavoni, “The Global Struggle for Food Sovereignty,” 682.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 685.

<sup>26</sup> Rosset, “Agrofuels, Food Sovereignty, and the Contemporary Food Crisis,” 192.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*



health.<sup>28</sup> Adopting agroecology principles, including more localized production, will not only be beneficial to health, ecosystems, and livelihood, but will also decrease the world's current dependence on huge amounts of fossil fuels in the transport of our food. To this end, agroecology and food sovereignty are crucial in remaking nature-society relations and working toward worldwide social transformation.<sup>29</sup>

### ***La Via Campesina's Fight for Food Sovereignty***

Rural life and livelihood has greatly suffered over the past few decades due to the inequities of the neoliberal capitalist system (with its structural adjustment programs, regional and global trade agreements, and supranational corporations). In April 1992, as a reaction to these types of policies, representatives from farm organizations across Central America, the Caribbean, Europe, Canada, and the USA, with a shared goal of challenging these policies, met in Managua, Nicaragua to discuss how they would challenge the inequalities of the system as a whole.<sup>30</sup> This culminated in the Managua Declaration, which led to the official creation of *La Vía Campesina* one year later.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Hannah Wittman, "Reworking the Metabolic Rift: La Vía Campesina, Agrarian Citizenship, and Food Sovereignty," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 36, 4 (2009): 816; Giménez and Shattuck, "Food Crises, Food Regimes and Food Movements," 128-9; Patel, "What does Food Sovereignty Look Like?" 669.

<sup>30</sup> Sofía Monsalve Suárez, "Gender and Land," in *Promised Land: Competing Visions of Agrarian Reform*, ed. Peter Rosset et al. (New York: Food First Books, 2006), 192; Rajeev Patel, "Transgressing Rights: La Vía Campesina's Call for Food Sovereignty," *Feminist Economics* 13, 1 (2007): 89.

<sup>31</sup> Desmarais, "The Vía Campesina," 95.



According to Martínez-Torres and Rosset, this grassroots movement “envisioned a simultaneously new and old ‘agrarian trajectory that would reintegrate food production and nature as an alternative culture of modernity’,” and may now be the “most important transnational social movement in the world”.<sup>32</sup> It is composed of 148 farmers’ organizations across 69 countries in Asia, Europe, the Americas, and Africa, and is “independent of governments, funders, political parties, NGOs, and non-peasant special interests”.<sup>33</sup> In less than two decades, *La Vía Campesina* has employed non-violent actions and mass mobilizations to defy the system and policies of neoliberal institutions such as the WTO and the World Bank. Its massive and worldwide peasant base strives to offer an alternative conception of the world, and “[puts] forth consistent and coherent alternative proposals which result from peasant reality and are shared by organizations from the great variety of situations in which peasants from different countries find themselves”.<sup>34</sup>

*La Vía Campesina* has become a space or platform where farmers and peasants can organize to engage in discussions regarding their shared goals and concerns, on an understanding of equality. According to Patel, this allows “different peasant groups with progressive political visions to meet, combine, and join forces against institutions that its membership sees as furthering neoliberal

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<sup>32</sup> María Elena Martínez-Torres and Peter M. Rosset, “La Vía Campesina: The Birth and Evolution of a Transnational Social Movement,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 37, 1 (2010): 150.

<sup>33</sup> Giménez and Shattuck, “Food Crises, Food Regimes and Food Movements,” 129; Patel, “Transgressing Rights,” 89; Martínez-Torres and Rosset, “La Vía Campesina,” 150; 171.

<sup>34</sup> Martínez-Torres and Rosset, “La Vía Campesina,” 171.



agricultural politics, such as the World Trade Organization”.<sup>35</sup> This has been an attempt on the part of the movement to bridge the divide between North and South, celebrating its plurality and “true peasant internationalism”.<sup>36</sup>

In addition, Suárez argues that *La Vía Campesina* has placed great importance on the active participation of women, and that gender issues are addressed during their gatherings. The movement has also made a point of including the voices of indigenous peoples, understanding the value of traditional knowledge in remaking nature-society relations.<sup>37</sup> Suárez mentions that feminist movements, as well as indigenous groups, openly question the notions of *universality* and *equality*, especially with respect to the human rights discourse. She acknowledges that while these are social constructions, and much work still needs to be done in deconstructing and changing the discourse, it would serve *La Vía Campesina* and the global food movement to use the platforms within the existing human rights regime to further its cause.<sup>38</sup>

In its participation in seeking another possible world that is not burdened with the exploitation and inequality with which the neoliberal capitalist system is wrought, *La Vía Campesina* adopts a different structure than typical organizations: it purposefully does not have a “policy-making secretariat,” so that there is no “sovereign authority dictating what any member organization or country can do”.<sup>39</sup> The precondition for *La Vía Campesina* membership, however, is the acceptance of *La Vía Campesina*’s principles, including food sovereignty.

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<sup>35</sup> Patel, “Transgressing Rights,” 89.

<sup>36</sup> Martínez-Torres and Rosset, “La Vía Campesina,” 150; 171.

<sup>37</sup> Suárez, “Gender and Land,” 194.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>39</sup> Patel, “What does Food Sovereignty Look Like?” 669.



## Conclusion

The deep entrenchment of the current neoliberal capitalist system is overwhelming when seeking an alternative. However, the crises emerging from this system, including but not limited to the global food crisis, has sparked a growing number of counter-movements, searching for a social transformation into a world based not on the market, but on the wellbeing of community, humans, and the environment. This paper argues that the global food movement, including what may be the largest social movement in the world, *La Vía Campesina*, is one such movement that has emerged from within civil society to tackle the problems arising from the current system, and, through mobilization and non-violent action, has been proposing viable alternatives. This is not just a movement about food, but rather a movement seeking to achieve broader social, cultural, economic, and political transformations, beginning from the ground up. In an interview, Paul Nicholson, one of the founding members of *La Vía Campesina*, admitted that while “clearly this is not going to happen overnight ... it is a process of accumulation of forces and realities coming together from the citizens of the entire planet.”<sup>40</sup> However, the increasing number of crises affecting most (if not all) of the world’s population today will result in a critical mass of people who will no longer stand for the inequalities of the neoliberal capitalist system, and together, will tip the scales toward the transformation into a more equitable world.

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<sup>40</sup> Wittman, “Interview,” 678-679.



## **Humanitarian Intervention and the Rwandan Genocide: Nothing More Than a "Band-Aid Solution"**

*L'intervention humanitaire et le génocide rwandais: Rien de plus qu'une «solution pansement»*

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**Abstract:** Is humanitarian intervention really a solution to humanitarian crises? This article will attempt to provide evidence that without serious re-evaluation of the mechanisms whereby military and socioeconomic humanitarian intervention is carried out internationally, humanitarian intervention cannot be more than a "Band-Aid solution" to improving the situation of intended beneficiaries. To prove this point, the short- and long-term benefits and disadvantages of humanitarian intervention during and in the wake of the Rwandan genocide will be examined and evaluated. Particular attention will be paid to the repercussions of socioeconomic humanitarian intervention. It is concluded that humanitarian aid in Rwanda was of greater economic than humanitarian benefit. Subsequently, policy recommendations will be made to improve the benefit of future humanitarian interventions by creating a United Nations standing army, increasing international commitment to providing disinterested aid, and by creating a pool of financial resources exclusively dedicated to preserving human rights and addressing humanitarian crises.

*Résumé: Est-ce que l'intervention humanitaire est vraiment une solution aux crises humanitaires? Cet article tentera de démontrer que, sans réévaluation sérieuse des mécanismes par lesquels l'intervention humanitaire militaire et socio-économique est effectuée au niveau international, l'intervention humanitaire ne peut pas être plus qu'une «solution pansement» dans l'amélioration des conditions de vie des populations ciblées. Nous soutiendrons cette thèse en évaluant plus particulièrement les avantages à court et à long terme ainsi que les inconvénients de l'intervention humanitaire pendant et à la suite du génocide rwandais. Une attention particulière sera accordée aux répercussions socio-économiques de cette intervention humanitaire afin de démontrer qu'elle était plus économique qu'humanitaire. Nous ferons également des recommandations dans le but d'améliorer l'impact des interventions humanitaires à venir, notamment en suggérant la création d'une armée permanente des Nations Unies, d'accroître l'aide internationale désintéressée, et de créer un schème de financement exclusivement dédié à la préservation des droits de la personne et aux crises humanitaires.*



One of the most significant changes brought about by World War II was the rise of the human rights movement and humanitarian intervention as articulated in the Geneva Conventions. In more recent times, humanitarian intervention has taken on a renewed significance. International responses to situations of civil strife in Egypt, Libya, Syria, and other states, as well as the rise of the Responsibility to Protect concept<sup>1</sup> have brought humanitarian intervention to the forefront of many discussions in the field of International Studies. This article will consider short- and long-term effects of humanitarian intervention and aid in Rwanda following the 1994 genocide. The paper's assertion is that humanitarian intervention did not have a truly positive impact on the country's well-being in terms of human rights and security, but that humanitarian intervention primarily served as a "Band-Aid solution" for the fundamental issues which arose in the wake of the genocide.

While humanitarian intervention has a variety of definitions, this essay considers Kyrre Grimstad's definition: "interference by one or several states in the internal affairs of another state [...] to prevent a situation where the most basic rights of the people of that state [are] being violated".<sup>2</sup> From this definition three main elements of humanitarian intervention are identified; the act, the actors, and the beneficiaries. As an act, humanitarian intervention focuses on the "obligation upon States to prevent or

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<sup>1</sup> Patricia O'Brien, (statement, 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar for Diplomats on International Humanitarian Law, New York City, NY, March 4, 2009): para. 28-32, Accessed July 26, 2012, <[http://untreaty.un.org/ola/media/info\\_from\\_lc/annual\\_seminar.pdf](http://untreaty.un.org/ola/media/info_from_lc/annual_seminar.pdf)>.

<sup>2</sup> Kyrre Grimstad, "Humanitarian Intervention: Historical, Legal and Moral Perspectives" (LLM Thesis, University of Cape Town, 2001): 2, Accessed March 12, 2012, <[http://www.publiclaw.uct.ac.za/usr/public\\_law/LLMPapers/grimstad.pdf](http://www.publiclaw.uct.ac.za/usr/public_law/LLMPapers/grimstad.pdf)>.



punish 'grave breaches'<sup>3</sup> as defined by the Geneva Conventions. For the purposes of this discussion, 'grave breaches' is understood to include "willful killing, torture or inhumane treatment; willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health; extensive destruction and appropriation of property not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly; taking of hostages; unlawful deportation or transfer (what is commonly referred to as 'ethnic cleansing')".<sup>4</sup> Humanitarian intervention may take the form of military and/or socioeconomic aid. The actors or entities that provide humanitarian intervention include states or organizations within the international community. Military (such as the Canadian Forces) and non-military (such as Canadian International Development Agency and Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade) intervention is generally seen as legitimate when it receives approval from the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). UNSC approval is an important factor because the UNSC is "the locus of decisions for humanitarian intervention"<sup>5</sup> which suggests that the UNSC has the authority to approve humanitarian intervention on behalf of a state that is in need of such help. Consequently, it is United Nations (UN) initiatives, such as peacekeeping missions, which tend to provide the primary vehicle to execute military interventions. Western European and the United States Armed Forces seem to be the main actors in these initiatives because they have

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<sup>3</sup> "Never Again: Preventing genocide and punishing those responsible," United Nations Department of Public Information, Accessed March 12, 2012, <<http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/neveragain.shtml>>.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Mohammed Ayoob, "Humanitarian Intervention and the International Society," *Global Governance* 7, 3 (2001): 228.



the resources (e.g. weapons, transportation, funding, etc.) required to contribute significantly to humanitarian aid during a crisis. This is particularly true when the initiative's foreseeable outcomes are in line with national interests. Ongoing socioeconomic aid is often undertaken by both governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The idealistic goal of humanitarian intervention is to alleviate human suffering and the violation of human rights, and to assist with recuperative efforts when human rights have been violated.<sup>6</sup> As such, the intended beneficiary of humanitarian intervention is "the people of the target state".<sup>7</sup> Contrary to this ideal, the Rwandan people suffered and human rights were violated during the genocide despite the apparent interventions made by the UNSC, military and non-military organizations.

To show how humanitarian intervention superficially addressed the humanitarian issues during the genocide, an overview of the event is presented and the overall effects of military and socioeconomic humanitarian intervention in the short- and long-term are assessed and compared. Key observations from the assessment are used to recommend policy changes that may achieve the altruistic goal of humanitarian intervention. The paper ends with a series of conclusions about the effectiveness of international aid in connection with the Rwandan genocide.

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<sup>6</sup> There are often a number of goals and this nominal goal is generally one of the weakest motivators for government actors though it is not said publicly by leaders. It is more frequently a major motivator for NGOs and Civil Rights agencies.

<sup>7</sup> Grimstad, " Humanitarian Intervention: Historical, Legal and Moral Perspectives," 5.



## The Rwandan Genocide

This case study provides an overview of the 1994 Rwandan genocide and examines how international humanitarian intervention in post-genocide Rwanda positively and negatively impacted its intended beneficiaries in the short term and the long term. The negative effects highlighted in this case study force us to re-examine humanitarian intervention policies in order to provide an adequate response to human rights crises and achieve the idealistic goal of humanitarian intervention.

The Rwandan genocide was the result of years of tension and conflict between two ethnic groups in Rwanda: the Hutu and the Tutsi. The tension appeared at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Rwandan population was separated into three distinct castes; the ruling Tutsi (14%), the working class Hutu (85%), and the Twa (1%).<sup>8</sup> The conflict was between the Hutu and the Tutsi. In 1918, following World War I, Rwanda was deemed a mandate of Belgium by the League of Nations and in 1959 Belgian support allowed the Hutu to overthrow Tutsi rule.<sup>9</sup> Rwanda became independent in 1962 and in 1973 the moderate (non-oppressive) Hutu government was overturned thus allowing a more radical (anti-Tutsi) Hutu government, under which the genocide occurred, to take its place.<sup>10</sup>

In 1990 the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), an army composed of mostly Tutsi Rwandan exiles, attacked Rwanda from Uganda.<sup>11</sup> The ensuing war lasted for three

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<sup>8</sup> Robinson, "The Tragedy of Rwanda," 53.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Leitenberg, "Rwanda, 1994: International incompetence produces genocide," 6.



years during which an "aggressive and exclusivist Hutu solidarity was consciously being forged in opposition to these despised outsiders [the Tutsi]".<sup>12</sup> This conflict resulted in the creation of the Arusha Peace Agreement for a cessation of hostilities between the RPF and the Hutu government. Negotiations also resulted in the creation of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), which was a 2,500-person force meant to "monitor the ceasefire and contribute to the security of [the capital city] Kigali".<sup>13</sup>

The genocide is said to have begun on April 6, 1994 when the airplane carrying Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana of Rwanda and President Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi was shot down just outside of Kigali.<sup>14</sup> The killing was carried out by the Hutu "Rwandan army, interahamwe, and party militias"<sup>15</sup> which targeted not only Tutsi but Hutu opposition members, Hutu moderates, media critics, professionals, and others who opposed the Hutu-supremacist regime.<sup>16</sup> The genocide as the "exclusive concentration on the mass elimination of all Tutsi"<sup>17</sup> did not begin until April 12. In the 100 days which followed, an estimated 800,000 men, women, and children were killed.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Organization of African Unity [OAU], "Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide," (African Union, 2000), Accessed March 4, 2012, para. 3.14, <<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4d1da8752.html>>.

<sup>13</sup> Holly Burkhalter, "A preventable horror?," *Africa Report*, 39.6 (1994): 17.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> OAU, "Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide," para. 14.22.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., para. 14.35-38.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., para. 14.3.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., para. 14.2.



## Short Term Effects

The 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide obliges "all States to prevent or punish acts of genocide".<sup>19</sup> There was clear evidence that the international community had been made aware that the situation in Rwanda met the Genocide Convention's definition of genocide as early as August 1993 and yet once the genocide had begun "[w]eeks were wasted in determining whether the killing fully met the strict legal definition of 'genocide'".<sup>20</sup> The international community had a delayed response to the genocide, largely due to "criticism and opposition by the United States".<sup>21</sup> As such, no military action was taken in the interest of human rights in the midst of the "concentrated frenzy of mass murder".<sup>22</sup> The delay of the international community in addressing "the gross crimes against humanity it knew were being committed"<sup>23</sup> was a significant failure to uphold the Geneva human rights conventions.

Potentially more shocking was the misuse of UNAMIR during the genocide. Under the Arusha Peace Agreement, UNAMIR had been dispatched to Kigali and consequently, it was there when the slaughter began in the city. The mission was initially "forbidden to intervene if it meant using force".<sup>24</sup> Canadian General Romeo Dallaire had requested new Rules of Engagement so that his troops could "protect

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<sup>19</sup> "Never Again: Preventing genocide and punishing those responsible."

<sup>20</sup> Douglas G. Anglin, "Rwanda: the preventable genocide. The Report of the International Panel of Eminent Personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda & the Surrounding Events," *International Journal* 56, 1 (2001): 149.

<sup>21</sup> Milton Leitenberg, "Rwanda, 1994: International incompetence produces genocide," *Peacekeeping & International Relations* 23, 6 (1994): 6.

<sup>22</sup> Lukin Robinson, "The Tragedy of Rwanda," *Monthly Review* 55, 7 (2003): 52.

<sup>23</sup> Anglin, "Rwanda: the preventable genocide. The Report of the International Panel of Eminent Personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda & the Surrounding Events," 149.

<sup>24</sup> Robinson, "The Tragedy of Rwanda," 58.



innocent civilians".<sup>25</sup> This request was rejected by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali thus rendering General Dallaire's force little more than observers to the massacre. In mid-April Belgium withdrew 440 of its troops because "ten of its disarmed soldiers had been murdered on April 7 by members of the Presidential Guard".<sup>26</sup> This was followed by the withdrawal of "several hundred Bangladeshi soldiers".<sup>27</sup> On April 21, the UNSC "voted unanimously to reduce UNAMIR to a skeleton force of just 250 men".<sup>28</sup> This mass reduction of UNAMIR military forces, coupled with its passive Rules of Engagement signified that the international community had essentially decided against providing humanitarian military intervention. Thus, military aid during the Rwandan genocide was virtually non-existent. The only positive effect came from General Dallaire whose well-known efforts to expose the genocide to the world through public media helped bring attention to the crisis.

The genocide ended on July 18, 1994 when the RPF finally defeated the Rwandan army.<sup>29</sup> Hundreds of thousands of people had been killed in the conflict and it was at this point that the international community as a whole began to play an active role in the recovery of the war-torn nation by implementing a socioeconomic programme that was intended to provide aid to the Rwandan people. This aid resulted in a variety of short-term effects, some of which are considered below.

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<sup>25</sup> Leitenberg, "Rwanda, 1994: International incompetence produces genocide," 6.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Burkhalter, "A preventable horror?."

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Robinson, "The Tragedy of Rwanda," 57.



Relative to the military inaction during the genocide, the socioeconomic aid provided after the genocide was very effective. In the short term, Jeff Drumtra, an Africa policy analyst, called Rwanda "a post-genocide society that [had] also experienced civil war, massive refugee displacement, [...] and economic ruin".<sup>30</sup> Today, Rwanda has come to be "hailed for its remarkable socioeconomic recovery".<sup>31</sup> The change is, in large part, due to international socioeconomic intervention and commitment to social and economic reform in the country.

Following the victory of the RPF, Rwanda was left with only minimal remnants of an economy, no infrastructure, and was a nation of people with physical and psychological needs to be met.<sup>32</sup> It was a country which had experienced massive human rights violations and which continued to experience human insecurity as a result of uncertainty about future procurement of basic needs. In the weeks after the genocide ended, the "international community and the media opened their eyes and [...] overflowed with sympathy and help".<sup>33</sup> Between 1994 and 2000 the international community sent the new Rwandan government "nearly \$4 billion in aid".<sup>34</sup> Although this economic aid provided some help to the country in the short-term, for reasons which will

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<sup>30</sup> Jeff Drumtra, U.S. Committee for Refugees, *Life After Death: Suspicion and Reintegration in Post-Genocide Rwanda*, (1998), 41-42, quoted in Organization of African Unity, *Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide* (2000), para. 17.1.

<sup>31</sup> Bert Ingelaere, "Do We Understand Life after Genocide? Center and Periphery in the Construction of Knowledge in Postgenocide Rwanda," *African Studies Review* 53, 1 (2010): 41.

<sup>32</sup> OAU, "Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide," para. 17.2.

<sup>33</sup> Robinson, "The Tragedy of Rwanda," 57.

<sup>34</sup> Anglin, "Rwanda: the preventable genocide. The Report of the International Panel of Eminent Personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda & the Surrounding Events," 149.



be discussed in the next section, it was not of lasting benefit to the Rwandan people and State.

The most noteworthy negative short-term effect of international humanitarian intervention was that foreign economic aid essentially reduced Rwanda's autonomy and complicated its recovery. A report commissioned by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) says that "Rwanda's economic difficulties [were] compounded by its great dependence on external funds".<sup>35</sup> Autonomy was reduced because "loans come with heavy conditions"<sup>36</sup> thus making Rwanda "almost completely dependent on satisfying criteria imposed by the IMF and World Bank"<sup>37</sup> to receive loans. This reliance on foreign aid effectively eliminated the new Rwandan government's sovereignty and indebteded the state to the international community.

In addition to causing economic dependence, foreign economic intervention complicated recovery because the aid which was required for rebuilding the nation was not fully provided. By September 1994 the international community had pledged only ≈14% of the funds necessary "for investigating the genocide and putting foreign monitors in place to ensure human rights abuses finally stop for good".<sup>38</sup> This left the Rwandan government without the resources needed to secure the country against hostile parties and to begin rebuilding the nation's infrastructure in earnest. At the time it appeared that slow foreign contribution to rebuilding human security in Rwanda might

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<sup>35</sup> OAU, "Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide," para. 23.14.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 23.20.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> Paul Watson, "Purging the evil," *Africa Report*, 39.6 (1994): 14.



leave room for former Hutu, who had committed the genocide and fled the country, to return and begin a guerrilla war.<sup>39</sup> Although short-term socioeconomic humanitarian intervention helped provide much-needed funds, the minimal financial contribution and the consequent delays in recovery due to dependence on the international community were clearly not beneficial and in fact increased threats to human security.

Other humanitarian intervention included legal aid. In November 1994, Paul Watson wrote that "it will be impossible to bury the past along with [the corpses] as long as thousands of suspected murderers hide from justice in refugee camps just across Rwanda's borders".<sup>40</sup> This was especially true immediately following the genocide. The Rwandan legal infrastructure had been decimated and could not viably hope to carry out justice against the perpetrators of the genocide itself.<sup>41</sup> Thus, the international community had the opportunity to intervene socially by providing a source of legal accountability in hopes of bringing reconciliation for some of the human rights violations it had allowed to be committed.

Legal intervention came in the form of the Arusha Tribunal. The Arusha Tribunal was officially created in November 1994 when the UNSC approved Resolution 955.<sup>42</sup> The Resolution created the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) which was intended to "judge persons accused of genocide and crimes against humanity".<sup>43</sup>

Between 1994 and 1999 the ICTR convicted 7 people, some of whom "were

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> OAU, "Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide," para. 18.4.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., para. 18.10.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., para. 18.14.



among the leaders of the genocide".<sup>44</sup> For example Jean Kambanda, the Prime Minister during the genocide, who "pleaded guilty to the crime of genocide",<sup>45</sup> received a life sentence in prison.<sup>46</sup> In bringing such perpetrators before a legitimate legal body, the ICTR not only meted out justice, but showed that the international community was at least nominally involved in recovery efforts. Further, the ICTR brought about reconciliation by satiating a thirst for justice in the short term when it was most immediately necessary.

### **Long Term Effects**

International humanitarian intervention has also affected Rwanda in the long term. Typically, military intervention occurs during the peak of a crisis and its outcome often provides a stable, safe, and secure environment for socioeconomic intervention to take root and grow and positively impact the intended beneficiaries. As stated earlier, military action was non-existent, had no lasting effect, and likely worsened conditions for the re-stabilization of the state and therefore it was not surprising that the socioeconomic aid provided was not of great assistance.

After the genocide, the ICTR continued to be beneficial for reconciliation, which is an important component in the rectification of human rights violations. Since 1994, the Arusha Tribunal has "convicted and sentenced 25 former government and military

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., para. 18.21.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., para. 18.28.



leaders and owners of media organizations involved in hate media".<sup>47</sup> Of these leaders of the genocide, 11 have been sentenced since 2000, testifying to the international community's lasting dedication to defending human rights and showing victims of human rights abuses that justice is being done.

Additionally, it seems that initial and continuing socioeconomic aid to Rwanda has brought about socioeconomic advancement. A 2011 World Bank Brief on Rwanda says that the country is "consolidating gains in social development and accelerating growth while ensuring that they are broadly shared to mitigate risks to eroding the country's hard-won political and social stability".<sup>48</sup> This means that the aid provided by the international community has manifested itself in the long term in Rwanda's "impressive development progress since the 1994 genocide and civil war".<sup>49</sup>

Two prime examples of Rwanda's development are the growth of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita and recent trends in its Human Development Index (HDI) score. These are good indicators of development because they are universal standards commonly used to measure the economic and social health of states, which means that it is possible to compare them among different states. Between 1978 and 1993, the fifteen years leading up to the genocide, Rwanda's GDP per capita rose at an average of 12.3% per year.<sup>50</sup> Between 1994 and 2009, the fifteen years following the

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<sup>47</sup> "Never Again: Preventing genocide and punishing those responsible."

<sup>48</sup> "Rwanda: Country Brief," The World Bank Group, Accessed March 14, 2012, <<http://go.worldbank.org/YP79K5BDT0>>.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> "Per capita GDP at current prices - US dollars," United Nations Statistics Division, last modified January 16, 2012, Accessed March 15, 2012,



genocide, Rwanda's GDP per capita rose at an average of 15.9% per year.<sup>51</sup> Between 1990 and 2011, Rwanda's average HDI growth rate was 2.97%.<sup>52</sup> This may seem small, but it should be noted that Rwanda's average HDI growth rate during this period was higher than that of any other country measured by the United Nations Development Programme during the same period.<sup>53</sup> Both GDP and HDI indicate a high rate of growth after the genocide which, due to Rwanda's dependence on "foreign agencies, governments and NGOs for any number of programmes that are crucial to rehabilitation, reconciliation and development",<sup>54</sup> can be attributed to foreign intervention.

The negative long-term effects of socioeconomic intervention have manifested themselves in a less obvious manner than the positive effects but are much deeper and more closely linked to human rights. The economic aid actually obscured social and human rights issues in Rwanda because "the Rwandan establishment operating at the center of society is crafting a preferred image of the country".<sup>55</sup> The main issue being obscured is a lack of real reconciliation among Rwandans, especially in rural areas.<sup>56</sup> When asked about the Gacaca process (a Rwandan criminal court) Rwandans living in

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<<http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?q=rwanda+GDP&d=SNAAMA&f=grID%3a101%3bcurrID%3aUSD%3bpcFIag%3a1%3bcrid%3a646>>.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> "Human Development Index trends, 1980-2011," United Nations Statistics Division, last modified December 20, 2011, Accessed March 15, 2012,

<<http://data.un.org/DocumentData.aspx?q=rwanda+hdi&id=269>>.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> OAU, "Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide," para. 23.16.

<sup>55</sup> Ingelaere, "Do We Understand Life after Genocide? Center and Periphery in the Construction of Knowledge in Postgenocide Rwanda".

<sup>56</sup> For an analysis of other issues in the wake of the Rwandan genocide refer to Ingelaere, "Do We Understand Life after Genocide? Center and Periphery in the Construction of Knowledge in Postgenocide Rwanda".



rural areas refuted its benefit, accusing it of "bringing neither reconciliation nor justice".<sup>57</sup>

In rural areas, locals give the impression that there is still distrust and tension among the people rather than the front of unity projected by the government. Despite appearances of positive economic growth, Rwanda has yet to overcome the consequences of the human rights violations that occurred during the conflict period.

A second negative long-term effect of foreign intervention is heavy economic dependence on foreign aid. For example, in 2001, foreign aid made up approximately 40% of the Rwandan government's budget.<sup>58</sup> This represents an extremely unhealthy dependence on outside sources. One needs to ask the question, "if all foreign aid was removed tomorrow, would the country de-stabilize?" The likely answer is "yes", because the government would lose a key source of income as well as legitimacy with its own people. In such a situation it is not difficult to imagine a return to pre-genocide conditions.

In summary, we see that the short-term effects of international intervention in the case of the 1994 Rwandan genocide include ineffective military intervention, except to alert the world about the genocide, the immediate infusion of international financial aid following the genocide, and legal aid in the form of the ICTR. The long-term effects include continuing financial aid as well as the ICTR continuing to bring about reconciliation, however this has produced an unhealthy dependency on external financial aid and the appearance of reconciliation on the world stage..

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> "Rwanda: Country Brief."



## **Policy Recommendations**

The evidence above comparing short- and long-term effects of military and socioeconomic humanitarian intervention in connection to the Rwandan genocide provides support for a variety of observations that may lead to policy changes. Based on the evidence presented in the paper, we see that humanitarian intervention in Rwanda proved to be of little short-term benefit in providing for the humanitarian needs of Rwandans and the Rwandan State. In the short term, the negative effects brought about by economic dependency vastly outweigh the positive effects of economic aid, however the creation of the ICTR seemed to have had a strong positive impact in the short term. Conversely, in the long term, the reconciliation brought about by the ICTR appears to have been largely constructed to preserve appearances. In addition, economic dependence has not diminished, however the benefit of economic growth due to the infusion of foreign aid seems to outweigh the negative effect of dependence since economic growth and stability may create conditions for future independence. Overall, international humanitarian intervention has been of greater economic benefit than social and psychological benefit to its intended beneficiaries.

In light of these observations, some policy recommendations seem appropriate for future humanitarian intervention. First, the international community should develop a mechanism whereby decisions regarding military intervention can be made quickly, for example a UN standing army. This would hopefully minimize the sort of debate and inaction which was seen in 1994. Second, the international community should provide



"generous and disinterested aid"<sup>59</sup> to countries in the aftermath of humanitarian crises such as genocide. This would allow governments to rebuild while strengthening the integrity of their sovereignty in an environment of fragile human security. Third, the international community should create a pool of financial resources dedicated to preventing human rights abuses and providing humanitarian intervention and aid which would be independent of any individual state. This would allow for intervention and aid to be dispensed without having to wait for the interests of individual, self-interested states to favour donating to projects of humanitarian intervention. As the UNSC is typically seen as the most legitimate source of humanitarian intervention, it would be the prime candidate for implementing these policies to address future humanitarian crises.

## **Conclusion**

This paper considered how military and socioeconomic humanitarian intervention in Rwanda impacted the country's situation both in the short and long term. Military humanitarian intervention proved to have very little effect due to the many limitations imposed on UNAMIR. Socioeconomic humanitarian intervention in Rwanda proved to have predominantly negative short-term effects in that it did not intervene before the genocide took place nor did it provide adequate economic support for rebuilding the shattered nation but increased Rwanda's dependence on the international community for foreign financial aid. Despite the failings of military humanitarian intervention and

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59. Robinson, "The Tragedy of Rwanda," 58.



economic aid, international socioeconomic humanitarian intervention in the form of legal aids, such as the ICTR, did appear to provide justice and foster reconciliation in the short term. In the long term, however, economic growth overshadowed the reconciliation process which, from the people's perspective, failed. International intervention and aid following the 1994 genocide left the Rwandan people and State in a situation where being the intended beneficiaries of international intervention has superficially improved their well-being and economy, but has increased their dependence on foreign aid, and has failed to create true reconciliation.

From the evidence provided by the case of the Rwandan genocide, it can be concluded that the humanitarian intervention was oriented less toward truly improving the fundamental well-being and human rights of its intended beneficiaries than it was toward simply showing people that help was being given and helping creating some degree of economic stability. But international aid cannot be a smokescreen of economic or nominal benefits. If the international community were to respond to all humanitarian crises as it did to the Rwandan genocide it is unlikely that any state or people groups in need of aid would truly get the aid that they desperately need. In future, the international community, and especially the UNSC, must seek to provide aid quickly and without thought of appearances on the world stage if humanitarian intervention is ever to be anything more than a "Band-Aid solution".

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## **Towards Indigenous Cosmopolitanism** *Vers un cosmopolitisme bolivien*

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**Abstract:** This research paper aims to examine the contemporary politicization of Bolivia's indigenous identified peoples through the lens of indigenous cosmopolitanism (Goodale 2006). By applying this hybrid theory of cosmopolitanism we can better understand the possibility of plurinational forms of governance and citizenship in the country. Using Mark Goodale's theory we can begin to piece together indigenous cosmopolitanism in its capacity to combine indigeneity with other more global forms of inclusion. Indigenous civil society has envisioned a new type of sociopolitical citizenship, a new framework of belonging in which marginalized indigenous groups are brought together with other members of "the race". To understand the way in which this indigenous cosmopolitanism has affected Bolivian politics and society this paper will look to examine the current party in power, Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), the Bolivian Constitution of 2009 and the El Alto region's Wayna Rap Movement.

*Résumé: Cet article vise à examiner la politisation actuelle des peuples identifiés comme indigènes en Bolivie à travers le prisme du cosmopolitisme indigène (Goodale 2006). Par l'application de cette théorie hybride du cosmopolitisme, nous pouvons mieux comprendre la possibilité de formes plurinationales de gouvernance et de citoyenneté dans le pays. En utilisant la théorie de Mark Goodale, nous pouvons commencer à reconstituer le cosmopolitisme indigène dans sa capacité à combiner indigénéité avec d'autres formes plus globales d'inclusion. La société civile indigène a envisagé un nouveau type de citoyenneté sociopolitique, un nouveau cadre d'appartenance dans lequel les groupes marginalisés indigènes sont réunis avec les autres membres de «la race». Afin de comprendre la manière dont ce cosmopolitisme indigène a affecté la politique et la société boliviennes, ce article examinera l'actuel parti au pouvoir, Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), la Constitution bolivienne de 2009 et le mouvement rap Wayna de la région d'El Alto.*



This research paper aims to examine the contemporary politicization of Bolivia's indigenous identified peoples through the lens of indigenous cosmopolitanism.<sup>1</sup> In applying this hybrid theory of cosmopolitanism we can better understand the possibility of plurinational forms of governance and citizenship in the country. The scope of this examination will be limited beginning with the year 2000 to the present with the catalyst social movement known as the Water War Revolt in the city of Cochabamba. Using Mark Goodale's theory of indigenous cosmopolitanism, this paper looks to frame cosmopolitanism in a new light and firmly within national borders. Linking this theory with the events that have unfolded in Bolivia we can begin to understand the political space indigenous peoples are forging for themselves and the way in which their inclusion in politics is subsequently changing ideas of citizenship, representational democracy, and constitutional rights.

This topic of research is important to the field of international studies as indigenous peoples are making great strides in their struggle for inclusion in both national politics as well as the international arena. Contributions to concepts such as democracy and citizenship made by indigenous identified peoples, particularly in countries with an indigenous popular majority, offer new and sometimes radical ideas. Exploring the ways in which these mobilizations have contributed to the possibility of a true and uniquely representational Bolivian democracy can have implications for other nations. The way in which new reforms and Constitutional amendments will affect not only the symbolic nature of democracy, but also its day-to-day power, requires much more research. It is clear that exploring these new trends within the context of

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<sup>1</sup> Mark Goodale, "Reclaiming Modernity: Indigenous Cosmopolitanism and the Coming of the Second Revolution in Bolivia," *American Ethnologist* 33, 4 (2006): 634-649.



indigenous cosmopolitanism will contribute greatly to knowledge in the multidisciplinary field of international studies. Before engaging in the current literature surrounding this topic the conceptual boundaries of this research should be clearly defined.

### **Understanding Bolivian Indigeneity**

First, in order to understand the Bolivian political climate and to grasp the ideas propagated by indigenous cosmopolitanism, it is imperative to understand indigeneity in Bolivia and the way it is politically articulated. It is estimated that approximately 60% (some sources list figures as high as 65%) of the country's 9.2 million people identify as indigenous or as *pueblos originarios*, the original people.<sup>2</sup> The Quechua and Aymara peoples are the two predominant population groups in the highlands while the lowlands are comprised of mostly mestizo groups.<sup>3</sup> Timo Schaefer, in his comparative analysis of the social movements in Bolivia and Ecuador quotes anthropologist Xavier Albo who sees politics as always having been a central component of indigenous community life in Latin America even prior to the advent of mass politics in the 1930s. As quoted in Schaefer, he maintains that:

In such a context identity is determined, to be sure, by communal bonds of belonging, by a shared language, shared traditions, shared cultural and behavioural norms. But it is determined also by a shared process of deliberate initiative through which the community decides on how to organise the joint process of economic, social and cultural (re)production.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Susan Healey, "Ethno-Ecological Identity and the Restructuring of Political Power in Bolivia," *Latin American Perspectives* 0094-582 (2009): 83.; John L. Hammond, "Indigenous Community Justice in the Bolivian Constitution of 2009," *Human Rights Quarterly* 33 (2011): 650.

<sup>3</sup> Anita Breuer. "The Problematic Relation between Direct Democracy and Accountability in Latin America: Evidence from the Bolivian Case," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 27, 1 (2008): 13.

<sup>4</sup> Timo Schaefer. "Engaging Modernity: The Political Making of Indigenous Movements in Bolivia and Ecuador, 1900-2008," *Third World Quarterly* 30, 2 (2009): 401.



Schaefer also presents the view of Deborah Yashar who sees the contemporary politicization of indigenista groups as a response to the state's intrusion on communal autonomies, particularly the implementation of neoliberal policies, which is seen as a direct challenge to the reproduction of indigeneity.<sup>5</sup> Whichever view one ascribes to it is clear that the preservation of cultural distinctiveness, indigenous histories, traditions and languages has always been at the forefront of indigenous demands in Bolivia. However, in recent years, it appears that indigenous groups are defining themselves through their collective vision of an inclusive and equitable nation rather than the cultural differences between native groupings.<sup>6</sup>

All the authors examined clearly map out the recent history of indigenous social movements in Bolivia, with particular emphasis on the Water War revolt as a catalyst movement which resulted in a call for a new Popular Assembly.<sup>7</sup> In the late 1990's the Bolivian government of Hugo Banzer Suarez went forward with a scheme to sell the concessions to provide water in the city of Cochabamba to the U.S. based multinational Bechtel Corporation. As prices for water began to rise dramatically following the signing of this contract an immense response and loud social unrest soon followed. During protests and demonstrations one Bolivian youth was murdered and dozens were injured at the hands of the national army. Now referred to as the Water War Revolt, this

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 399.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 411.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Albro, "The Culture of Democracy and Bolivia's Indigenous Movements," *Critique of Anthropology* 26 (2006): 388; Willem Assies, "Bolivia: A Gasified Democracy," *Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe/European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 76 (2004): 27; Jeffrey Webber, "Bolivia in the Era of Evo Morales," 249.; Healey, "Ethno-Ecological," 83.



massive uprising forced the Banzer government to cancel its contract with Bechtel in April of 2000 and set the stage for the Popular Assembly.<sup>8</sup>

There is an overwhelming consensus surrounding how instrumental these public assemblies were, which were organized by indigenous leaders, as well as worker, trade and agrarian union communities.<sup>9</sup> These movements are also seen as holding real political power as they are identified as the leading force which successfully overthrew both President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada and his predecessor Carlos Mesa as well as setting the stage for the electoral victory of President Evo Morales, the leader of the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS: Movement Towards Socialism) in 2005.<sup>10</sup> Melissa MacLean even goes so far as to assert that these “extra-institutional” mechanisms have prevailed over institutional ones when determining the outcome of the political system.<sup>11</sup>

Thomas Biolsi, as cited in Goodale, believes that these new spaces of indigenous mobilization are shifting the terms by which these groups engage with the nation-state. Through his analysis of the different categories of legal and political spaces indigenous peoples have begun creating for themselves, he maintains that:

[Indigenous peoples] assert new forms of self-identity and belonging that call into question dominant understandings of citizenship, nationalism, the legal categories of residency and domicile, and the foundations of civil and political rights.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Goodale, “Reclaiming Modernity,” 637.

<sup>9</sup> Albro, “The Culture of Democracy,” 388; Healey, “Ethno-Ecological Identity,” 85.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 84; Webber, “Era of Evo Morales,” 249; Albro, “The Culture of Democracy,” 387; Assies, “Gasified Democracy,” 25; Schaefer, “Engaging modernity,” 397.

<sup>11</sup> Melissa MacLean, “Decentralization, Mobilization and Democracy in Mature Neoliberalism: The Bolivian Case,” *Dissertation Abstracts International, A: The Humanities and Social Sciences* vol. 66, issue 10 (2006): 3791.

<sup>12</sup> Goodale, “Reclaiming Modernity,” 639.



Biolsi develops this by presenting the idea of multiplicity, that is, indigenous peoples are present physically in both traditionally native spaces as well as in modern institutions. They defy traditional expectations of more restrictive categories of identity and have forged new forms of subjectivity by excelling in things such as the arts and sciences while still remaining indigenous.<sup>13</sup> Although this is a rather simplified overview of the current state of indigenous affairs in Bolivia, it should provide some context for the emerging indigenous cosmopolitan consciousness which has impacted Bolivian society.

### **Indigenous Cosmopolitanism**

The international relations theory of cosmopolitanism asserts the equality of all human beings across all levels of socio-economic-political spheres of citizenry. Cosmopolitans generally have broad conceptions of morality in which personal autonomy and freedoms outweigh conceptions of nation-state autonomy. Cosmopolitans advocate for global governance and the idea of a global citizenship. They call for equal protection of the environment and advocate against the negative side effects of technological development. The theory of cosmopolitanism shares some aspects of universalism, for example, the globally acceptable notion of human dignity that must be protected in international law.<sup>14</sup>

However this paper will present a very specific and even seemingly contradictory hybrid theory of cosmopolitanism; indigenous cosmopolitanism. Mark Goodale maintains a new form of indigenous cosmopolitanism is emergent, specifically focusing

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> John Baylis and Steve Smith, *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 53.



on Bolivia, that combines indigeneity with other more global forms of inclusion. Indigenous civil society is forging a new category of socio-political citizenship, a new framework of inclusion, in which marginalized indigenous groups are brought together with other urban indigenous groups all over the world; collectively this all-encompassing indigenous community is referred to as “the race”.<sup>15</sup> This sense of global belonging reflects the resolve to harness culture for political purposes and is a rejection of the expectations of both modernity and traditional forms of indigeneity. Indigenous cosmopolitanism projects a contradictory framework of inclusion, as national identity often is for indigenous peoples. It is described as both translocal and transnational *and* non-global and non-universal.<sup>16</sup> This is to say that indigenous peoples envision a world of cosmos that are variable and relative. They do not envision a world in which they have the same rights and obligations as everyone else, indigenous or not. An indigenous cosmopolitan, contrary to the traditional international relations cosmopolitan, would not justify their views based on a moral principle nor within a moral framework. Rather, indigeneness is being redefined because it is part of the broader political struggle and it is used as a discursive weapon against elites in the country.<sup>17</sup>

### **Manifestations of Indigenous Cosmopolitanism in Bolivia**

To understand the way in which this indigenous cosmopolitanism has affected Bolivian politics and society this paper will look to examine the current party in power,

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<sup>15</sup> Goodale, “Reclaiming Modernity,” 635.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 641.



Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), the Bolivian Constitution of 2009 and the El Alto region's Wayna Rap Movement.

MAS, which began as a leftist political movement and has now transformed into the leading political party, brings indigenous people together. These people align themselves with non-Native others in a political imagination not limited to indigenous peoples' issues or to solidarities bound to the nation-state.<sup>18</sup> MAS has begun reconstituting indigeneity as being located within a modest and regional space which draws on both neo-Marxism and neoliberalism. Its statement of ideological principles of 2005 reaffirm a desire to create a post-revolutionary Bolivia that is founded on human rights, participatory democracy, respect for difference and liberty.<sup>19</sup> Its statement of ideological principles as described in Goodale's work is seen as a mosaic of references to:

the cosmology of Western culture, the Industrial Revolution, Homo Faber, the folly of the U.S.-led coca leaf eradication campaign, globalization, neocolonialism, the principle of a living planet expressed by Pachamama, a letter written to George Washington by an "indigenous leader of the redskins," the philosophy of the Ayllu, structural adjustment, and the vaguely utopian writings of the Club of Rome.<sup>20</sup>

These radical expressions of indigenous cosmopolitanism are articulated within a unitary cosmopolitan framework but also brings together multiple cosmopolitanisms and even regional and national frames of references.<sup>21</sup> Their ideological principles and promises of participatory democracy are now being put to the test in the context of national politics and policies since the electoral victory of MAS's leader Evo Morales in

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<sup>18</sup> Robin Maria Delugan, "Indigeneity across Borders: Hemispheric Migrations and Cosmopolitan Encounters," *American Ethnologist* 37,1 (2010): 84.

<sup>19</sup> Goodale, "Reclaiming Modernity," 635.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.



2005. Waltraud Queiser Morales looks at Evo Morales's government as being truly representative of all of Bolivia with many of his ministers being university-educated radicals and leaders of the country's indigenous, labour and peasant movements. She also points to the inclusion of women and Indian identified peoples in the Cabinet as being truly representational.<sup>22</sup>

Since their advent to power MAS has begun to redefine democracy in the country based on the idea of plurinationalism which can be seen as an indigenous cosmopolitan ideal. This conception of plurinational democracy, as it is yet to be solidified in legal or territorial orders, is rather difficult to define. It can be understood as a decentralization process which engages citizen involvement in municipal governance, politically recognizes grassroots organizations, and attempts to articulate local ideas of personhood with regional and national ideas about citizenship.<sup>23</sup> Bret Gustafson tries to explain the ideological goal of this type of governance describing that it aims to highlight the "mosaic" of pluralities where indigenous rights are represented among and across multiple institutions and scales of the state.<sup>24</sup> The Bolivian Constitution enacted by MAS in 2009 can be seen as endorsing the extensive rights for indigenous peoples encapsulated in a plurinational state as well as recognizing its power to legitimize indigenous community justice.<sup>25</sup> Quickly glancing at the Preamble of the Constitution these intentions are clear and explicit:

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<sup>22</sup> Waltraud Queiser Morales, "Responding to Bolivian Democracy: Avoiding the Mistakes of Early U.S. Cuban Policy," *Military Review* 86, 4 (2006): 32.

<sup>23</sup> Bret Gustafson, "Manipulating Cartographies: Plurinationalism, Autonomy, and Indigenous Resurgence in Bolivia," *Anthropological Quarterly* 82, 4 (2009): 985-988; MacLean, "Decentralization," ii.

<sup>24</sup> Gustafson, "Manipulating Cartographies," 1009.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 987; Hammond, "Indigenous Community Justice," 649.



We leave in the past the colonial, republican, and neoliberal State. We take up the historical challenge of collectively constructing the Unitary Social State of Plurinational Communitarian Law [...] free, independent, sovereign, democratic, intercultural, decentralized, and with autonomies.<sup>26</sup>

The ideological goals of MAS ascribe to many components of indigenous cosmopolitan consciousness that is prevalent in the country. While connections are being made in more recent articles, particularly those published after 2006, there remains a lot to be seen. The way in which new reforms and Constitutional amendments will affect not only the symbolic nature of democracy, but also its day-to-day power, requires much more research.

Although the politics of indigenous cosmopolitanism are the focus of this paper, it is also important to examine some of the cultural and social effects of this theory. Mark Goodale writes about the El Alto region's Wayna Rap Movement as the cultural variation on this theory. This movement is made up of urbanized campesino adolescents who speak Quechua, Aymara, Spanish and idiosyncratic Hispano-Amerindian hybrids. The youth are reclaiming possibilities of modernity as well as situating themselves in more global forms of inclusion through rap music.<sup>27</sup> Most of the El Alto rappers migrated to the city in the mid-1980s as the result of neoliberal austerity programs which caused devastating unemployment. Their response to this social and economic disruption was to use rap and hip hop music as a mode of cultural production.<sup>28</sup> The El Alto rappers are seen as negotiating between politics and culture

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<sup>26</sup> Preamble and Article 1, constitution of Bolivia (2008) as cited in Gustafson 986.

<sup>27</sup> Goodale, "Reclaiming Modernity," 634.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 643.



expressed in a sophisticated awareness of their own power as cultural innovators. They wear baggy clothing like artists they see in North American media and create a hip hop dialect which draws from native languages and English exclamations.<sup>29</sup>

Goodale describes this indigenous cosmos as, “one that finds moral value and indeed empowerment within the marginalization of disaffected urban youth culture across the Americas (and beyond)”.<sup>30</sup> He connects this new form of hip hop music to indigenous cosmopolitanism through three processes. The first process begins with the projections set forth by this music which bring the moral together with the political. The second process anchors these projections in emerging understandings of indigeneity, one that resists restrictive traditional categories of inclusion. Lastly this movement envisions new universes of meaning meant to be radical and potentially transformative.<sup>31</sup> This movement, along with the changing political climate and changing ideas of citizenship, is allowing Bolivia’s indigenous peoples to demand and ensure a new status-quo in the country. This status-quo is far beyond the one that Bolivia, and the world, has historically offered them. In order to fully realize this process of political, social and cultural change in the country, the very idea of the state itself must be reconsidered. As presented above, the very idea of Bolivia *is* presently being reconsidered.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 643.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 644.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.



## Debates among Scholars

There are largely two areas of contestation among scholars who have written recently on the topic. The first being whether Bolivia is, or will become, a viable democracy under their constitution reforms and this plurinational model. Second, whether the concept of decentralization and municipal governance will result in future regional conflict and foster sentiments of separatism or if it will ensure Bolivia's viability as a single country.

Robert Albro (2006) tackles the question of democratic viability and maps out the scholarly debate throughout his article. He looks at how scholars (whose books and works are largely available only in Spanish) have engaged in the intellectual debate surrounding Bolivian democracy. He notes that the "routine inability" of Bolivian Presidents to finish out the terms of their office has sparked this debate on the status and the meaning of democracy for the region's popular indigenous majority.<sup>32</sup> He often refers to the Bolivian case as a "democratic project", however, his conceptions of the issue are not the most recent and do not reflect the events since Evo Morales came into power.<sup>33</sup> William Assies also addresses this debate and names scholars such as Whitehead (2001) and O'Donnell (2003) who have tried to set measures to assess the viability of democracy.<sup>34</sup> He asserts that a "representational deficit" is existent in the political arena and highlights that the indigenous mobilizations could potentially pose a threat to democratic stability.<sup>35</sup> Again these assertions are limited to the pre-Moales

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<sup>32</sup> Albro, "The Culture of Democracy," 388.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 389.

<sup>34</sup> Assies, "Gasified Democracy," 26.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 31.



regime and therefore do not take into account the 2008 constitutional reforms which impact the question of democracy.

Tim Schaefer and Bret Gustafson who have been published more recently consequently take a very different perspective. Schaefer maintains that although indigenous groups throughout their mobilizations have clearly lacked political identities their present demands are no longer rejections of the state but rather attempts to transform them. He therefore does not see the politicization of indigenous peoples as a threat to democracy in Bolivia.<sup>36</sup> While the question of democracy is a hot topic for scholars researching Bolivian social movements and politics, all the academics mentioned above seem to end their articles with a question mark. They maintain that much is yet to be seen before any clear assessments can be made of the democratic viability of this model.<sup>37</sup>

The debate surrounding regional autonomy and its implications is not as contested in the literature as the one concerned with democracy. In particular Melissa Jane MacLean, Bret Gustafson, and Jeffery Webber discuss this issue and the varying perspectives in scholarship. Webber offers references to Latin American and Masista scholars who identify regional conflict as the main reason for divisions and cultural tensions in the country.<sup>38</sup> He presents the arguments of Franz Xavier Barrios Suvelza who sees danger in over-politicization by transferring political power to municipal and regional governments.<sup>39</sup> Gary Molina is also cited as conceptualizing this call for

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<sup>36</sup> Schaefer, "Engaging Modernity," 411; Assies, "Gasified Democracy," 38; Morales, "Responding to Bolivian Democracy," 32; Gustafson, "Manipulating Cartographies," 1011.

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<sup>38</sup> Webber, "Era of Evo Morales," 250.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 251.



decentralization as a “worrying trend” and believes the main focus should be on the building up of institutional apparatuses of the state while keeping intact the status quo of socio-economic foundations.<sup>40</sup> Bret Gustafson purports that the situation is complex for indigenous peoples however he sees departmental autonomy as seeking to harden boundaries instead of eliminating them.<sup>41</sup> MacLean instead presents a more optimistic picture of this kind of governance based on field research carried out in the months following the Water War of 2000. She also sees this situation as being very complex and asserts that the relationship between decentralization and democratization is shaped by specific and varying political conditions. However, within the context of inequality she sees this decentralization as an intention to increase legitimacy of the state by improving representation and incorporation.<sup>42</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Mark Goodale’s theory of indigenous cosmopolitanism can allow us to imagine a state, citizenship, and potentially a world, where ideas of governance, participatory democracy and respect for a plurality of national identities are evolving. By examining the contemporary social movements in Bolivia and the way in which they have changed peasant and indigenous political and social engagement, one can begin to piece together this radical hybrid of cosmopolitanism. As outlined in this paper, this new consciousness in the country can be seen as having a transformative power over national politics. As these emerging ideas of governance and identity continue to evolve

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 252.

<sup>41</sup> Gustafson, “Manipulating Cartographies,” 1010.

<sup>42</sup> MacLean, “Decentralization,” ii.



and grow in Bolivia there remains a lot to be seen. One thing is certain however, Indigenous identified peoples in Bolivia, by projecting new conceptions of indigeneity and through their demands of a respectful government built on participatory democracy and plurinationalism, are now being heard. Their politics can sometimes be radical, however their integration into the state, which does away with restrictive categories of inclusion, might be the answer to many of the social, economic and political problems in the country.



**The Effects of Neoliberalism and U.S. Hegemony in Bolivia**  
*Les effets du néolibéralisme et de l'hégémonie américaine en Bolivie*

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**Abstract:** This paper examines neoliberalism and its effect on the Latin American region with a focus on Bolivia. It examines the United States of America's role as a dominant hegemon who through neoliberalism and its economic instruments such as Structural Adjustment Programs has continued to reinforce the economic, social and political structures that contribute to the growing inequality in the country. Through the use of international financial institutions, which are heavily influenced by the U.S., neoliberal reforms were implemented and a process of deregulation, privatization and opening of markets began to be put in place. As the living standards of the most marginalized communities of Bolivia continued to worsen, the dominant hegemon's power strengthened. The democratic election of Evo Morales in 2006 after successfully campaigning against neoliberalism offers evidence that Bolivia is on track to breaking free of U.S. hegemony. The lives of the most marginalized communities in Bolivia are improving as the process of reversing the effects of neoliberalism are taking place and as a search for an alternative model to neoliberalism continues.

*Résumé: Cet article examine le néolibéralisme et ses effets sur l'Amérique latine, notamment en Bolivie. Il explore le rôle des États-Unis d'Amérique comme puissance hégémonique dominante qui, par le néolibéralisme et ses instruments économiques tels que les Programmes d'Ajustement Structurel, a continué à renforcer les structures économiques, sociales et politiques qui contribuent à l'inégalité croissante dans le pays. Grâce à l'utilisation des institutions financières internationales, qui sont fortement influencées par les États-Unis, les réformes néolibérales ont été mis en œuvre et un processus de déréglementation, de privatisation et d'ouverture des marchés ont commencé à être mis en place. Alors que le niveau de vie des communautés les plus marginalisées de Bolivie continuaient de se dégrader, la puissance de l'hégémon continuaient de se renforcer. L'élection démocratique d'Evo Morales en 2006, après une campagne réussie contre le néolibéralisme, est une preuve que la Bolivie est en bonne voie pour se libérer de l'hégémonie américaine. Les conditions de vie des communautés les plus marginalisées de Bolivie s'améliorent à mesure que le processus d'inversement des effets du néolibéralisme est en cours et que la recherche d'un modèle alternatif au néolibéralisme continue.*



Bolivia has experienced a shift to the left culminating in the democratic election of Evo Morales, the first Indigenous president in the country's history. Traditionally dominated by western powers, Bolivia's trajectory towards democracy has not been an easy one, impeded by foreign, rather than domestic, obstacles. In 2006, Bolivia was finally successful in breaking free of the hegemonic hold that the United States of America had on them. By first exploring the role of the U.S. as a hegemon in the Latin American region, then turning to look at neoliberalism as a hegemonic economic model and finally, by focusing on the relationship between neoliberalism and international financial institutions and their effects in Bolivia, I will to show that neoliberalism has been an economic model used to reinforce U.S. hegemony in Bolivia through programs implemented by international financial institutions.

Bolivia's history since its encounter with colonizing powers is not unique in Latin America; it is one of continuous social, political and economic exclusion unleashed on marginalized members of the region. Colonial and imperial powers' constant tampering with Bolivia's domestic affairs have also had severe consequences for the most marginalized communities in Bolivia, which make up the overwhelming majority of the population.

As Paul Drake states in his study of neoliberalism in Latin America, "from the waning years of the Cold War through the dawn of the new millennium, U.S. hegemony in Latin America reached unparalleled heights."<sup>1</sup> It is evident that the United States has had a strong presence in Latin America, and much like a relay race, the baton of

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<sup>1</sup> Paul W. Drake, "The Hegemony of U.S. Economic Doctrines in Latin America," in *Latin America After Neoliberalism*, ed. Leo Panitch, Colin Leys. (London: Merlin Press, 2007), 32.



dominance has been passed from Spain to the U.S. and even at times shared and interchanged with other dominant states since the encounter over 500 years ago.

Although the U.S. and Latin America share regional proximity, their respective economic, social and political situations are drastically different. President Barack Obama is not the first U.S. president to refer to Latin America, as “our backyard,” not so subtly highlighting his opinion of the Latin American region. An argument can be made regarding America’s unwavering interest in developing a close relationship with Latin America, geopolitics being an obvious motivation, but one does not have to look very hard to find a clear distinction between the U.S.’ relationship with its neighbour to the north, Canada. The former is not a relationship founded, nor based, on mutually beneficial arrangements, thus the balance of economic and political advantages tips heavily on the side of the U.S.

The concept of hegemony is useful to examine the U.S. dominance exerted over Latin American countries. “The hegemon has waged this war of ideas to establish, regulate, and maintain a stable and open international economic order commensurate with its policies and interests.”<sup>2</sup> In other words, the U.S. establishes the rules of the game and Latin American countries accept, implement and obey the rules set forth by the hegemon.

Moving away from more obvious aggressive and coercive tactics previously used to impose their economic and political interests as they did in the 1960s-1970s in many Latin American countries, the U.S. chose to turn to the more subtle tactics of international institutions and their economic instruments. Consent is achieved through

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 26-27.



what Drake calls “transmitters of doctrine,”<sup>3</sup> institutions and actors that transmit U.S. and neoliberal hegemony. Included among them are government institutions (U.S. Federal Reserve, the Agency for International Development, the Treasury, and even the presidency), international institutions (IMF, the World Bank, the Inter American Development Bank, GATT), private institutions (U.S. and Latin American business leaders, foreign investors), and an international “epistemic community” of economists.

Benjamin Kohl, who has studied Bolivia extensively, explains the unequal relationship created by structural adjustment programs (SAP), as one of the many projects devised and implemented to maintain dominance over developing countries.<sup>4</sup> These programs include a set of policies that a developing country must abide by in order to receive a loan or varying types of financial aid. These conditions promote an opening of markets, privatization and deregulation, and if followed properly are presumed to boost economic growth.

These types of projects are recommended and enforced by the Bretton Woods institutions. It is important to note that the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, both Bretton Woods institutions, were and still are heavily influenced by the U.S., and are used to establish its hegemony on the region.<sup>5</sup>

Latin American elites and political leaders did not have much choice but to accept strict conditions that came with these structural adjustment programs. Acceptance seemed an absolute requirement with the implementation and enforcement of conditions set forth if developing nations wanted to have a chance to participate in the new global

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>4</sup> Benjamin H. Kohl, *Impasse in Bolivia: Neoliberal Hegemony and Popular Resistance* (New York: Zed Books, 2006), 20.

<sup>5</sup> Drake, “The Hegemony of U.S. Economic Doctrines in Latin America,” 41.



economy. Thus, neoliberalism spread out through Latin America like wild fire and the hegemon succeeded once again in furthering their interests in the region.<sup>6</sup>

Once developing nation's implemented neoliberalism and SAPs, a cycle of dependency began. These programs directly target a country's economic and social structures, and force them to open their markets to the global economy and begin to work in tandem with world standards largely set by the U.S.<sup>7</sup>

As Kohl explains, neoliberalism creates division among classes and is an extension of capitalism which marginalizes vulnerable classes of society. "The decline of government's ability to subsidize basic services is one of neoliberalism's universal outcomes and represents one of its principal hidden costs, contributing to increasing the divide between the rich and poor".<sup>8</sup>

This inequality is a consequence of the economic globalization promoted in the region through neoliberalism. The usual suspects that accompanied SAPs and neoliberal reforms were, "...the selling of state-owned enterprises, the reduction of state spending in the public sector, the active courting of foreign investment, and the aggressive exploitation of untapped primary resources."<sup>9</sup>

In fact, exploited natural resources were a central issue in the rise against neoliberalism and the transformation Bolivia has gone through since 2006. The Indigenous-peasant and popular movements gained momentum throughout the

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<sup>6</sup> Kohl, *Impasse in Bolivia*, 20.

<sup>7</sup> Drake, "The Hegemony of U.S. Economic Doctrines in Latin America," 36.

<sup>8</sup> Lourdes Beneria, *Gender, Development, and Globalization: Economics as if All People Mattered* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Jacques B. Gelinias, *Juggernaut Politics: Understanding Predatory Globalization* (New York: Zed Books, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> John Chasteen, "Problems in modern latin american history :Sources and interpretations: Completely revised and updated" in John Charles Chasteen and James A. Wood, eds. *Latin American Silhouettes* (Wilmington, Del: SR Books, 2004), 302.



neoliberal era largely due to growing discontent with neoliberalism and its detrimental effects on the most vulnerable communities.

In 1997, the World Bank, offered Bolivia \$600 million in debt relief on the condition they privatize water in Cochabamba. Then President, Sanchez de Lozada accepted the offer and abided by the condition. As a result, Aguas del Tunari-Becthel, the company that bought the rights, raised the price of water to ridiculously high amounts, “[under the neoliberal model] resources such as water are no longer conceived of as public goods that individuals have rights to as citizens, but rather as scarce commodities whose access for consumers is mediated by the market.”<sup>10</sup> In the year 2000, the Indigenous-peasant and popular movements converged and waged a mass protest against the privatization of water.

The diversity of movements that collectively stood together in “la guerra del agua” (the water wars) included a wide set of social movements, the largest being the Indigenous-peasant movement. The mass mobilization resulted in a victory for social movements in Bolivia, as the private company “Aguas de Tunari-Bechtel” was thrown out and the sale, and distribution and consumption of water were turned over to a collective, self-managed enterprise.”<sup>11</sup>

This victory set the stage for another collective stance that took place three years later, “la guerra del gas,” (the gas wars), when the same movements rose against the privatization of another natural resource, gas. As Perreault explains, “the Guerra del

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<sup>10</sup> Tom Perreault, “Popular Protest and Unpopular Policies: State Restructuring, Resource Conflict, and Social Justice in Bolivia,” in David V. Carruthers, ed. *Environmental justice in Latin America* (Boston: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2008), 24.

<sup>11</sup> Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson, *Revolutionary Horizons: Past and Present in Bolivian Politics* (; New York: Verso, 2007), 104.



Gas must be viewed against the historical backdrop of Bolivia's colonial past and neocolonial present, with their systemic processes of rapacious resource exploitation, social exclusion, and impoverishment."<sup>12</sup> The movements rose in response to the harsh consequences brought on by neoliberalism and its direct effects on the population.

Neoliberalism provides the conditions for social movements to respond to the inequalities it creates. "The most powerful of these movements were organized within and on the basis of Indigenous communities that understood capitalism as imperialism and an uninterrupted process of more than 500 years of exploitation, oppression, and genocidal subjection in the face of their proud resistance."<sup>13</sup>

Bolivia's Indigenous peoples have suffered the legacies of the neoliberal model and have converged with other popular movements in Bolivia to say enough is enough and fight to reclaim natural resources as 'national' resources.

Morales and the MAS (Movement towards Socialism) won its first election campaigning with a very strong anti-neoliberal message. They have continued with their initial intent to make structural changes in the state and economy and continue to experiment with an alternative model to neoliberalism and construct a better future for all.

Bolivians showed their unwavering support at the ballot box in December 2009, "Evo Morales obtained 64.4 percent of the popular vote - nearly 40% percent more than his main challenger. His party won two-thirds of the seats in Congress, which ensured

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<sup>12</sup> Perreault, "Popular Protest and Unpopular Policies," 247.

<sup>13</sup> James F. Petras and Henry Veltmeyer, *Social Movements in Latin America: Neoliberalism and Popular Resistance*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 22-23.



him absolute majority.”<sup>14</sup> The majority of the population still lives under conditions of poverty and yet they have put their faith back in Morales and the MAS.

The changes have been significant and relevant to daily life, especially those of Indigenous peoples. “Aside from the obvious change of the presence of campesinos and Indigenous people in government, new aspirations appear on the horizons, the possibility of living well and occupying spaces previously banned to them. For the first time in history, Indians can walk through parts of the cities they had previously been forbidden to enter.”<sup>15</sup>

In conclusion, Bolivia’s levels of poverty, illiteracy and infant mortality are a few indicators that show neoliberalism has failed to improve the lives of the most vulnerable and marginalized portion of the population. Instead through its implementation, it had widened the inequality gap between the rich and the poor. As Kohl explains, neoliberal theorists argue that only by reducing the reach of the government and transferring the responsibility for the economy to the private sector is it possible to maximize economic growth. Thus, neoliberalism continues to be implemented and reconstituted in states worldwide, and the international financial institutions continue to transmit neoliberalism and its hegemony through their programs.

Since the democratic election of Evo Morales in 2006, Bolivia has made a progressive shift towards Socialism and implemented changes that have contributed significantly to the social, political and economic inclusion of previously excluded populations. Previously marginalized voices in Bolivia have become political activists

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<sup>14</sup> Martín Sivak, *Evo Morales: The Extraordinary Rise of the First Indigenous President of Bolivia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 219.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.



and in this role are creating a democratic revolution in search of an alternative model to capitalism. This revolutionary shift is attributed to the alliances made between the Indigenous-peasant and popular movements and their stand against neoliberalism and U.S. hegemony.