

From Market Globalism to Imperial Globalism: Ideology and American Power after 9/11

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ABSTRACT *As capitalist liberalism reinvented itself in the last two decades, it drew largely on the ideas of nineteenth-century free-market philosophers. The Anglo-American framers of globalism spoke softly and persuasively as they sought to attract people worldwide to their vision of globalization as a leaderless, inevitable juggernaut that would ultimately engulf the entire world and produce democracy and material benefits for everyone.*

In the bellicose political climate following the attacks of September 11, however, many market globalists believed that the best way of maintaining the viability of their project was to toughen up their some of their ideological claims to fit better the neoconservative vision of a benign US empire backed by overwhelming military power. As a result, market globalism morphed into imperial globalism, but not without some dissent in the neoliberal camp.

The Bush administration's switch from soft power to hard power tactics has been both documented and analyzed on the policy level in today's raging debates over whether or not the post-9/11 United States actually constitutes an 'empire'. However, little attention has been paid to the corresponding ideological-discursive shift from a 'soft' narrative centered on the idea of a 'leaderless market' to a much tougher imperial language of American pre-eminence.

Seeking to identify the major ideological differences between the market globalism of the 1990s and the imperial globalism of the 2000s, this essay analyzes a number of representative utterances and writings of influential advocates of globalism before and after 9/11. The discursive shift from market globalism to imperial globalism explicated in this essay attests to the central role played by ideology in the dynamics of growing global interdependence.

Introduction

Soon after the collapse of Soviet-style communism in Eastern Europe, various power elites concentrated in the global North stepped up their efforts to sell their neoliberal version of

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'globalization' to the public. While not disavowing some of the coercive measures referred to by Joseph Nye as 'hard power'—particularly the application of economic pressure through international lending institutions like the IMF and World Bank—this phalanx of neoliberal forces preferred enhancing the legitimacy of their worldview by means of 'soft power', that is, the use of cultural and ideological appeals to effect their desired outcomes without commanding allegiance.¹ Seeking to make a persuasive case for a new global order based on their values, these power elites constructed and disseminated narratives and images that extolled the virtues of deregulated and globally integrated markets. Throughout the 1990s, they advanced a globalization discourse sufficiently systematic to add up to a comprehensive political ideology. Elsewhere, I have referred to it as 'globalism'—a market ideology endowing the buzzword 'globalization' with norms, values, and meanings that not only legitimate and advance neoliberal interests, but also seek to cultivate consumerist cultural identities in billions of people around the world (Steger, 2002; 2003; 2004).²

For most of the decade, this double-pronged strategy of utilizing the persuasive power of ideas and ideals together with the 'sticky power' of international economic policy seemed to minimize ideological dissent.³ Many people came to accept globalism's core claims, thus internalizing large parts of an overarching normative framework that advocated the deregulation of markets, the liberalization of trade, and the privatization of state-owned enterprises.⁴ Representing what Pierre Bourdieu and Zygmunt Bauman have called a 'strong' discourse, globalism was difficult to resist because it relied on the soft power of 'common sense', that is, the widespread belief that its prescriptive program ultimately derived from an accurate description of 'objective reality' (Bauman, 1999, pp. 28–29, 127–28; Bourdieu, 1998, p. 95). As Judith Butler (1996, p. 112) notes, the constant repetition, public recitation, and 'performance' of an ideology's core claims tend to have the capacity to produce what they name.

By the late 1990s, however, a growing divergence between neoliberal ideological claims and the everyday experience of people in many parts of the world undermined globalism's legitimacy. This, in turn, facilitated the production of counterdiscourses powerful enough to seriously challenge the neoliberal worldview. Disseminated by heterogeneous social forces on both the political Left and Right, these competing ideological perspectives found their political manifestation in successive waves of worldwide antiglobalist protests. From the spectacular 1999 anti-WTO demonstrations in Seattle to the street protests at the 2001 G-8 Summit in Genoa, these massive displays of popular dissent elicited two major responses from the hegemonic neoliberal forces.

First, and consistent with their original soft-power strategy, some globalists responded with public admissions that globalization did, indeed, require 'minor reforms', particularly 'better management'. These concessions were often followed by highly publicized assurances to put 'a human face' on globalization. Former wizards of globalism like George Soros, Joseph Stiglitz, Jeffrey Sachs, and Paul Krugman publicly bemoaned the 'excesses of market fundamentalism' that had occurred during the 'Roaring Nineties' (see Stiglitz, 2003; 2002; Soros, 2002). At the same time, however, other globalists recommended hard-power tactics to crack down on dissenters. Yet, in order to justify their strange willingness to activate coercive state powers against protesters, these globalists sought to mobilize the corporate-media in fueling the stereotype of the chaotic, cobblestone-throwing antiglobalizer.⁵

As a result, mainstream television images broadcast from Genoa glossed over the fact that the vast majority of demonstrators were committed to nonviolent means of social change. These attempts to stabilize the neoliberal model by means of generating fear and demands for greater security were increasingly reflected in globalist discourse. Globalizing markets were

now portrayed as requiring protection against the violent hordes of irrationalism. In other words, the allegedly 'inevitable' and 'irreversible' unfolding of self-regulating markets suddenly needed to be helped along by strong law enforcement measures that would 'beat back' the enemies of democracy and the free market.

After al-Qaeda's devastating attacks on the world's most recognized symbols of a US-dominated globalized economy and culture, this neoliberal tendency to tolerate or endorse hard-power tactics grew even stronger. In the volatile post-9/11 environment in the United States, neoconservative players in the Bush administration drew on the existing climate of fear to promote their vision of a benign American empire leading a coalition of 'allies' in the open-ended War on Terror. President George W. Bush abandoned the mildly isolationist position he espoused during the 2000 election campaign and instead adopted the bellicose views of inveterate hard-power advocates like Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld.⁶

If the liberalization and global integration of markets was to continue as a viable project, many globalists felt they had little choice but to enter into a shaky ideological compromise with the ascending neoconservative forces. If neoliberals accepted that their core ideological claims had to be 'hard-powered' to fit the neoconservative agenda, then, in turn, neoconservatives would continue to support a 'free-market' discourse that also helped to soften their militarism. Indeed, this uneasy and sometimes stormy marriage between the economic neoliberalism of the 1990s and the neoconservative security agenda of the 2000s marked the birth of an 'imperial globalism' with an American face. While the hard-powering of market globalism led to a modification of some of its original claims, it would be a mistake to assume that the neoliberal project came to an end with 9/11. The Bush administration's embrace of hard power has been amply documented and analyzed *on the policy level* in today's raging debates over whether or not the post-9/11 United States actually constitutes an 'empire'—formal or informal.⁷ However, little attention has been paid to the corresponding *ideological-discursive shift* from the soft power discourse of persuasion centered on the idea of a 'leaderless market' to the tough imperial language of American dominance. What are the major ideological differences between market globalism and imperial globalism? Seeking to shed light on the precise nature of these morphological changes in the dominant ideology, this essay scrutinizes a number of representative utterances and writings of influential advocates of globalism before and after 9/11. Focusing on what I identify as its six core claims of globalism, I analyze these major ideological changes and raise critical questions of ideological continuity. Ultimately, then, this essay seeks to contribute to the larger project of developing a critical theory of globalization by focusing on the shifting discursive power dynamics (for a more detailed discussion of developing a critical theory of globalization, see Steger, 2004, pp. 10–11; Mittelman, 2004, Chap. 4, pp. 34–44.)

Claim No. 1: Globalization is about the Liberalization and Global Integration of Markets

This foundational claim of market globalism seeks to shape global preferences without resorting to verbal threats—and, therefore, represents the essence of 'soft power' (Nye, 2004, p. 5). It activates the neoliberal ideal of the self-regulating market as the normative basis for a future global order. According to this ideological narrative, the vital functions of the free market—its rationality and efficiency, as well as its alleged ability to bring about greater social integration and material progress—can only be realized in a liberal society that values and protects individual freedom. Let us consider some examples.

A passage in a 1990s *BusinessWeek* article (13 December 1999, p. 212) clearly defines globalization in market terms: ‘Globalization is about the triumph of markets over governments. Both proponents and opponents of globalization agree that the driving force today is markets, which are suborning the role of government. The truth is that the size of government has been shrinking relative to the economy almost everywhere.’ Joan Spiro, US Undersecretary of State for Economic, Business, and Agricultural Affairs in the Clinton administration, stated that ‘One role [of government] is to get out of the way—to remove barriers to the free flow of goods, services, and capital’ (Spiro, 1996).

Perhaps the most eloquent exposition of the neoliberal claim that globalization is about the liberalization and global integration of markets can be found in Thomas Friedman’s bestseller, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization* and its post-9/11 sequel, *Longitudes and Attitudes: The World in the Age of Terrorism*. Indeed, many commentators have emphasized that Friedman’s books provide the ‘official narrative of globalization’ in the United States today (see, e.g. Bole, 1999, pp. 14–16). The award-winning *New York Times* columnist argues that people ought to accept the following ‘truth’ about globalization: ‘The driving idea behind globalization is free-market capitalism—the more you let market forces rule and the more you open your economy to free trade and competition, the more efficient your economy will be. Globalization means the spread of free-market capitalism to virtually every country in the world’ (Friedman, 2000, p. 9).

After 9/11, both neoliberals and their opponents emphasized the continued viability of this foundational globalist claim while acknowledging a hardening of the narrative. For example, the Indian writer Arundhati Roy, one of the most eloquent critics of corporate globalization, argues that the language of neoliberalism appears to have absorbed the aggressive idiom of ‘breaking open markets’ (Roy, 2004, p. 11). This discursive shift is clearly visible in President Bush’s public utterances before and after 9/11. During his 2000 presidential campaign, candidate Bush consistently promised to ‘work tirelessly to open up markets all over the world’ and ‘end tariffs and break down barriers everywhere, entirely, so the whole world trades in freedom’ (Bush, 2000). After 9/11, Bush still hoped to ‘ignite a new area of global economic growth through free markets and free trade’, but his 2002 *National Security Strategy of the United States* (NSSUS) explicitly merges market language with security slogans, culminating in the credo of imperial globalism: ‘Free markets and free trade are key priorities of our national security strategy’ (Bush, 2002a).

Bush’s post-9/11 understanding of the neoliberal project as part of an overarching security agenda has been dutifully echoed in similar remarks by world leaders as different as Paul Martin, Canada’s Minister of Finance, and Goh Chok Tong, Prime Minister of Singapore (see Lien, 2003). Moreover, most importantly, a good number of neoliberal globalists went along with the hard-powerization of their market ideology. For example, Thomas Friedman—initially a strong proponent of the Bush administration’s global war on terror in Afghanistan and Iraq—admonished his readers to go along with the neoconservative posture of ‘aggressive engagement’ in the Middle East. In his view, this was the best strategy for ‘leading the Arab world into globalization’ (Friedman, 2003, pp. 314–315).

Claim No. 2: Globalization is Inevitable and Irreversible

A study of the utterances of influential globalists in the 1990s reveals their reliance on an economic narrative of historical inevitability. While disagreeing with Marxists on the final goal of

historical development, globalists nonetheless share with their ideological opponents a fondness for such terms as ‘irresistable’, ‘inevitable’, and ‘irreversible’ to describe the projected path of globalization. Let us consider some examples.

In a speech on US foreign policy, President Clinton told his audience: ‘Today we must embrace the inexorable logic of globalization . . . Globalization is irreversible. Protectionism will only make things worse’ (Clinton, 1999; and Clinton cited in Ross, 1997). Frederick W. Smith, chairman and CEO of FedEx Corporation, suggests that ‘globalization is inevitable and inexorable and it is accelerating . . . Globalization is happening, it’s going to happen. It does not matter whether you like it or not, it’s happening, it’s going to happen’ (Smith, 1999). Neoliberal elites in the global South faithfully echoed the globalist language of inevitability. For example, Manuel Villar, the Philippines Speaker of the House of Representatives, insisted that ‘We cannot simply wish away the process of globalization. It is a reality of a modern world. The process is irreversible’ (Villar, 1998).

Throughout the 1990s, the neoliberal portrayal of globalization as some sort of natural force, like the weather or gravity, made it easier for globalists to convince people that they would have to adapt to the discipline of the market if they were to survive and prosper. Hence, the globalist claim of inevitability neutralized the challenges of antiglobalist opponents by depoliticizing the public discourse about globalization: neoliberal policies were above politics, because they simply carried out what was ordained by nature. This view implied that, instead of acting according to a set of choices, people merely fulfill world-market laws that demanded the elimination of government controls. Since the emergence of a world based on the primacy of market values reflected the dictates of history, resistance would be unnatural, irrational, and dangerous.

In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, this claim came under sustained criticism by commentators who emphasized the ‘dark side of globalization’. Some even proclaimed the imminent ‘collapse of globalism’, worrying that the terrorist attacks would usher in a new age of nationalism (Saul, 2004; see also Roach, 2002, p. 65). Noted neoliberal economists like Robert J. Samuelson argued in his widely read *Newsweek* column that globalization might not be inevitable since previous globalization processes had been stopped by similar cataclysmic events such as the 1914 assassination of the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo (Samuelson, 2003, p. 41).

On the other hand, the unfolding War on Terror allowed the Bush administration to weave the determinist language of globalism into imperial pronouncements of the inexorable triumph of the forces of ‘Good’ over the ‘Axis of Evil’. The old soft-power discourse of *economic* inevitability reemerged confidently in the new hard-power narrative of *military* inevitability. Constant assurances that the United States and its allies would prevail in the War on Terror reverberated through the media landscape. For example, Christopher Shays, neoliberal Republican Congressman from Connecticut and Chair of the House Subcommittee on National Security, publicly expressed his belief that the ‘fight against global terrorism’ was bound to end in a ‘safer world’ characterized by ‘broad-based free expression and free markets’. After all, Shays added, the ‘toxic zeal’ of the terrorists ‘can only be defeated by market forces, the relentless inevitability of free peoples pursuing their own enlightenend self-interest in common cause’ (Shays, 2003).

Claim No. 3: Nobody is in Charge of Globalization

Market globalism’s deterministic language offered its proponents in the 1990s yet another rhetorical advantage. If the natural laws of the market have indeed preordained a neoliberal course

of history, then globalization does not reflect the arbitrary agenda of a particular social class or group. In other words, globalists merely carry out the unalterable imperatives of a transcendental force much larger than narrow partisan interests. People are not in charge of globalization; markets and technology are. Here are two examples.

Robert Hormats, vice chairman of Goldman Sachs International, emphasized that ‘The great beauty of globalization is that no one is in control. The great beauty of globalization is that it is not controlled by any individual, any government, any institution’ (Hormats, 1998). In his usual confident tone, Thomas Friedman, too, alleged that ‘the most basic truth about globalization is this: *No one is in charge* . . . We all want to believe that someone is in charge and responsible. But the global marketplace today is an Electronic Herd of often anonymous stock, bond and currency traders and multinational investors, connected by screens and networks’ (Friedman, 2000, pp. 112–113).

After 9/11, it became increasingly difficult for market globalists to maintain the position that ‘nobody is in charge of globalization’. While a number of corporate leaders still reflexively referred to the ‘leaderless market’, neoconservatives close to the Bush administration lectured market globalists that global security and a global liberal order ‘depend on the United States—that “indispensable nation”—wielding its power’ (Kagan, 2002). After all, if America indeed spearheaded the cause of universal principles, then it had a responsibility to make sure that the spread of these values was not hampered by ideological dissenters. The resulting hardening of discourse is obvious in the 2002 NSSUS. For example, Bush ends the preface of this document by glorifying tough US global leadership: ‘Today, humanity holds in its hands the opportunity to further freedom’s triumph over all these [terrorist] foes. The United States welcomes our [*sic*] responsibility to lead in this great mission’ (Bush, 2002a).

If the United States indeed sought to conceal its imperial ambitions in the 1990s behind the soft language of market globalism, then the gloves definitely came off after 9/11, exposing the iron fist of an irate giant. The attacks changed the terms of the globalist discourse in that they enabled neoconservatives to put their global ambitions *explicitly* before a public alarmed by an amorphous terrorist threat and thus vulnerable to what Claes Ryn, Chairman of the National Humanities Institute, calls the ‘neo-Jacobin spirit’ of the Bush administration (Ryn, 2003, pp. 384–385). The resulting move toward imperial globalism meant that the claim ‘nobody is in charge of globalization’ had to be abandoned and replaced by Bush’s aggressive pronouncement of global leadership.

However, the replacement of claim three with a more aggressive pronouncement of global Anglo-American leadership should not be read as a sign of globalism’s ideological weakness. Rather, it reflects its ideational flexibility and growing ability to respond to a new set of political issues. Indeed, like all full-fledged political belief systems, globalism is increasingly bearing the marks of an ‘ideational family’ broad enough to contain the more economic variant of the 1990s as well as its more militaristic post-9/11 manifestation.

Claim No. 4: Globalization Benefits Everyone (. . . in the Long Run)

This claim lies at the very core of market globalism because it provides an affirmative answer to the crucial normative question of whether globalization represents a ‘good’ or a ‘bad’ phenomenon. Market globalists in the 1990s frequently connected their arguments in favor of the integration of global markets to the alleged benefits resulting from the liberalization and expansion of world trade. At the 1996 G-7 Summit in Lyon, France, for example, the heads of states of the

seven major industrialized democracies issued a joint communiqué that contains the following passage:

Economic growth and progress in today's interdependent world is bound up with the process of globalization. Globalization provides great opportunities for the future, not only for our countries, but for all others too. Its many positive aspects include an unprecedented expansion of investment and trade; the opening up to international trade of the world's most populous regions and opportunities for more developing countries to improve their standards of living; the increasingly rapid dissemination of information, technological innovation, and the proliferation of skilled jobs. These characteristics of globalization have led to a considerable expansion of wealth and prosperity in the world. Hence we are convinced that the process of globalization is a source of hope for the future. (Economic Communiqué, 1996)

The public discourse on globalization in the 1990s was rife with such generalizations. Even cautious Alan Greenspan, chairman of the US Federal Reserve Board, insisted that 'there can be little doubt that the extraordinary changes in global finance on balance have been beneficial in facilitating significant improvements in economic structures and living standards throughout the world' (Greenspan, 1997).

In addition, globalists often seek to cement their decontestation of globalization as 'benefits for everyone' by coopting the powerful language of 'science' which claims to separate 'fact' from 'fiction' in a 'neutral' fashion, that is, solely on the basis of 'hard evidence'. And yet, the two most comprehensive empirical assessments of changes in global income distributions in the last decade have arrived at sharply conflicting results.⁸ Even those globalists who consider the possibility of unequal global distribution patterns nonetheless insist that the market itself will eventually correct these 'irregularities'. As John Meehan, chairman of the US Public Securities Association, puts it, 'episodic dislocations' such as mass unemployment and reduced social services might be 'necessary in the short run', but, 'in the long run', they will give way to 'quantum leaps in productivity' (Meehan, 1997).

Remarkably resilient after 9/11, this claim nonetheless received hard-power treatment. Indeed, the terrorist attacks actually added to the fervor with which imperial globalists speak of the supposed benefits accruing from the rapid liberalization and global integration of markets. For example, in the NSSUS, Bush consistently mentions the alleged benefits of securing the benefits of free markets: 'Free trade and free markets have proven their ability to lift whole societies out of poverty—so the United States will work with individual nations, entire regions, and the entire global trading community to build a world that trades in freedom and therefore grows in prosperity' (Bush, 2002a).

Claim No. 5: Globalization Furthers the Spread of Democracy in the World

This claim is anchored in the neoliberal assertion that *freedom*, *free markets*, *free trade* and *democracy* are synonymous terms. Affirmed as common sense throughout the 1990s, the compatibility of these concepts often went unchallenged in the public discourse. Francis Fukuyama, for example, asserted that there existed a clear correlation between a country's level of economic development and successful democracy. While globalization and capital development did not automatically produce democracies, 'the level of economic development resulting from globalization is conducive to the creation of complex civil societies with a powerful middle class. It is this class and societal structure that facilitates democracy' (Fukuyama, n.d.). Praising the economic transitions towards capitalism in Eastern Europe, US Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton told

her Polish audience that the emergence of new businesses and shopping centers in former communist countries should be seen as the ‘backbone of democracy’ (Rodham Clinton, 1999).

After September 11, this claim, too, became firmly linked to the Bush administration’s security agenda. The President did not mince words in ‘Securing Freedom’s Triumph’—his *New York Times* op-ed piece a year after the attacks: ‘As we preserve the peace, America also has an opportunity to extend the benefits of freedom and progress to nations that lack them. We seek a peace where repression, resentment and poverty are replaced with the hope of democracy, development, free markets and free trade’ (Bush, 2002b). Fourteen months later, he reaffirmed this ‘forward strategy for freedom’ by referring to his country’s unwavering ‘commitment to the global expansion of democracy’ as the ‘third pillar’ of the United States’ ‘peace and security vision for the world’ (Bush, 2003).

This idea of securing ‘freedom’ through an American-led drive for political and economic ‘democratization’ around the globe—thus connecting the military objectives of the War on Terror to the neoliberal agenda of liberalizing markets—has emerged as the centerpiece of imperial globalism. And nowhere did these hard discursive dynamics of imperial globalism become as apparent as in the corporate scramble for Iraq following the official end of ‘major combat operations’ on 1 May 2003. Already during the first days of the Iraq war in late March 2003, globalists with strong ties to the Republican party had suggested that Iraq be subject to a radical neoliberal treatment.

Exemplifying this ideological marriage of convenience between many neoliberals and neo-conservatives, Robert McFarlane, former National Security Advisor to President Reagan and current chairman of the Washington, DC-based corporation Energy & Communication Solutions, LLC, together with Michael Bleyzer, CEO and president of SigmaBleyzer, an international equity fund management company, co-authored a remarkably brazen op-ed piece in *The Wall Street Journal* bearing the suggestive title, ‘Taking Iraq Private’. Calling on ‘major U.S. corporations, jointly with other multinationals’, to ‘lead the effort to create capital-friendly environments in developing countries’, the globalist duo praised the military operations in Iraq as an indispensable tool in establishing the ‘political, economic and social stability’ necessary for ‘building the basic institutions that make democracy possible’. Alleging that recent analyses of the ‘economic policies of 128 countries’ identified neoliberal measures as the ‘key drivers for development’, the two men reminded the government that ‘the U.S. must demonstrate that it is not only the most powerful military power on the planet, but also the foremost market economy in the world, capable of leading a greater number of developing nations to a more prosperous and stable future’ (McFarlane & Bleyzer, 2003).

It did not take a long time for the Bush administration to heed such advice. In what amounted to a concentrated public relations initiative in autumn 2003, Secretary of State Colin Powell conveyed the administration’s view of the matter in countless speeches, Internet messages, and television and radio interviews. For example, in his address to an economic conference on the Middle East attended by hundreds of American and Arab-American business executives, Powell emphasized the administration’s intention to develop the US–Middle East Free Trade Area (MEFTA) within a decade. Linked to the administration’s 2002 ‘US–Middle East Partnership Initiative’, the new project also included programs to send Arab college students to work as interns in American corporations (Colin Powell cited in Treaster, 2003; Olivastro, 2002).

In the meantime, in Iraq, the US head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, Ambassador Paul Bremer, had pressured the Governing Council to let Order 39 take effect, permitting complete foreign ownership of Iraqi companies and assets (excluding natural resources) that had hitherto been publicly owned, total remittance of profits, and some of the lowest corporate

tax rates in the world (Williams, 2003). No doubt, the military-industrial complex and related enterprises have been the biggest beneficiaries of imperial globalism. For example, in the fiscal year 2002, the 'Big Three' US weapons makers—Lockheed Martin, Boeing, and Northrop Grumman—received a total of more than \$42 billion in Pentagon contracts. This was an increase of nearly one-third from 2000, President Clinton's final year in office (Hartung, 2004, pp. 19–21). The Bush administration awarded largely without competition or detailed explanations of total costs multi-billion dollar reconstruction contracts to such companies as Bechtel Group Inc., Halliburton Co., and Stevedoring Services of America—all generous contributors to the Republican party with strong personal connections to high-level officials in the two Bush administrations, including Vice President Cheney, former Secretary of State George Shultz, Under Secretary of Defense Douglas Feith, and Defense Policy Board member Richard Perle. Companies headquartered in countries that opposed the Iraq war, like France, Germany, and Russia, were not invited to submit any bids (Mittal, 2003).

Thus, imperial globalism amounts to a neoliberal structural adjustment program by military means. With their economy in complete shambles and burdened with a national debt of nearly \$400 billion, the Iraqi people have to come to grips with the emerging reality that debtor countries might be unwilling to write off their loans in their entirety, thus making the privatization of the country's oil industry—either partially or fully—a distinct possibility for fiscal reasons. Moreover, UN Security Council Resolution 1483, adopted on 23 May 2003, incorporated Iraq into the global market, but granted broad power to the United States and United Kingdom to manage Iraq's economic fate for at least a year. It should come as no surprise that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has announced that since the American people have already made significant investments in 'liberating and rebuilding Iraq', the administration would turn to the Iraqi regime for funds before further burdening the US taxpayer (Looney, 2003).

In short, the globalist claim of spreading freedom and democracy has become a convenient narrative for the Bush administration and its supporters in Congress to secure and expand its influence and power globally by combining arguments in favor of military interventions with the familiar slogans of market liberalization.

Claim No. 6: Globalization Requires a War on Terror

At this point, it should be obvious why, in the post-9/11 context, it has become necessary for neoliberal globalist forces to make their peace with a hardened narrative. If globalization, understood as the liberalization and global integration of markets, is to remain a viable project then the coercive powers of the state have to be employed against those who threaten it—both internal antiglobalist dissenters and external terrorist foes. Hence the addition of a new globalist claim: globalization requires a war on terror.

Two representative samples of how this new claim has been circulating in the public discourse are Thomas Barnett's 'The Pentagon's New Map', published in the March 2003 issue of *Esquire* magazine, and Robert Kaplan's 'Supremacy by Stealth' featured in the July 2003 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*. Both publications reach a mass readership and its authors are respected professionals in their fields. Thomas Barnett, a Harvard-educated professor of military strategy at the US Naval War College, has been advising the Office of the Secretary of Defense for some time. Within weeks of September 11, he was called to the Pentagon and installed as the assistant for strategic futures in the Office of Force Transformations. Since then, he has been giving his briefings regularly at the Pentagon, in the intelligence community, and to high-ranking officers from branches of the military.

In his much-debated *Esquire* article, which he later expanded into a best-selling book, Barnett argues that the Iraq War marks ‘the moment when Washington takes real ownership of strategic security in the age of globalization’. He breaks the globe down into three distinct regions. The first is characterized by ‘globalization thick with network connectivity, financial transactions, liberal media flows, and collective security’, yielding nations featuring stable democratic governments, transparency, rising standards of living, and more deaths by suicide than by murder (North America, most of Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and a small part of Latin America). He calls these regions of the world the ‘Functioning Core’, or ‘Core’. Conversely, areas where ‘globalization is thinning or just plain absent’ constitute a region plagued by repressive political regimes, regulated markets, mass murder, and widespread poverty and disease (the Caribbean Rim, virtually all of Africa, the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and Southwest Asia, and much of Southeast Asia). The breeding ground of ‘global terrorists’, Barnett refers to this region as the ‘Non-Integrating Gap’, or ‘Gap’. Between these two regions, one finds ‘seam states’ that ‘lie along the Gap’s bloody boundaries’ (Mexico, Brazil, South Africa, Morocco, Algeria, Greece, Turkey, Pakistan, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia).

For Barnett, the importance of September 11 is that the attacks forced the United States and its allies to make a long-term military commitment to ‘deal with the entire Gap as a strategic threat environment’. In other words, the desired spread of globalization requires a War on Terror. Its three main objectives are: ‘1) Increase the Core’s immune system capabilities for responding to September 11-like system perturbations; 2) Work on the seam states to firewall the Core from the Gap’s worst exports, such as terror, drugs, and pandemics; and, most important, 3) *Shrink the Gap* . . . The Middle East is the perfect place to start’. The third point is particularly important, because ‘the real battlegrounds in the global war on terrorism are still *over there*’. As Barnett emphasizes, ‘We ignore the Gap’s existence at our own peril, because it will not go away until we as a nation respond to the challenge of making globalization truly global’.

At the end of his article, Barnett offers a nod to neoliberals by conceding ‘it will take a whole lot more than the U.S. exporting security to shrink the Gap’, because ‘the integration of the Gap will ultimately depend more on private investment than anything the Core’s public sector can offer. But it all has to begin with security, because free markets and democracy cannot flourish amid chronic conflict’ (Barnett, 2003; 2004).

This celebration of hard-power US hegemony is precisely the starting point of Robert D. Kaplan’s recent essay. Simply taking for granted that ‘the United States now possesses a global empire’, the award-winning journalist and best-selling author urges his readership to ‘move beyond a statement of the obvious’ and instead join him in pondering how America should ‘manage an unruly world’ after 9/11:

The purpose of [US] power is not power itself; it is the fundamentally liberal purpose of sustaining the key characteristics of an orderly world. Those characteristics include basic political stability; the idea of liberty, pragmatically conceived; respect for property; economic freedom; and representative government, culturally understood. At this moment in time it is American power, and American power only, that can serve as an organizing principle for the worldwide expansion of a liberal civil society. (Kaplan, 2003a)

What does Kaplan mean by ‘the idea of liberty, pragmatically conceived’? It turns out that Kaplan’s pragmatics of liberty refer chiefly to hard-power military tactics designed to maintain American pre-eminence: fast-track naturalization for foreign-born soldiers fighting for the empire; training special forces to be lethal killers one moment and humanitarians the next; using the military to promote democracy; not to let military missions be compromised by

diplomacy; the resolve to ‘fight on every front’, including the willingness to strike potential enemies pre-emptively on limited evidence, deal with the media ‘more strictly’, and crack down on internal dissent, especially anti-war demonstrators. Kaplan suggests ‘Ten Rules’ for running the world, which culminate in the idea that the best way for the United States to maintain and expand its empire is to adopt the ‘pagan warrior ethos of second-century Rome’. What Kaplan seems to forget in the heat of his argument, however, is that neither Emperors Trajan nor Hadrian were renowned for their liberal inclinations. This, of course, is the central problem of the uneasy compromise between neoliberalism and neoconservatism: once empire gets hold of market globalism, it may turn it into a very different ideological creature. No wonder, then, that Kaplan closes his article with a panegyric to Winston Churchill and his assessment of the United States as ‘a worthy successor to the British Empire, one that would carry on Britain’s liberalizing mission’ (Kaplan, 2003a).

From Market Globalism to Imperial Globalism: Ideological Continuity or Rift?

As capitalist liberalism reinvented itself in the last two decades, it drew largely on the basic ideas of nineteenth-century British free-market philosophers. Still, it represented a remarkable ideological achievement of neoliberal globalists in the 1990s to re-energize these quaint arguments with the buzzword ‘globalization’, thereby bestowing new currency upon their antiquated vision. The Anglo-American framers of market globalism spoke softly and persuasively as they sought to attract people worldwide to their vision of globalization as a leaderless, inevitable juggernaut that would ultimately engulf the entire world and produce liberal democracy and material benefits for everyone.

In the harsh political climate following the attacks of September 11, however, many market globalists struggled to maintain the viability of their project. One obvious solution was to toughen up their ideological claims to fit the neoconservative vision of a benign US empire relying on overwhelming military power. As a result, market globalism morphed into imperial globalism. Claims one (globalization is about the liberalization and global integration of markets) and four (globalization benefits everyone)—the backbone of market globalism—are still largely intact but had to undergo hard-power facelifts. The determinist language of claim two found its new expression in the proclaimed ‘inevitability’ of America’s military triumph over its terrorist nemesis. Claim three (nobody is in charge of globalization), however, was dropped in favor of Bush’s ostentatious pronouncement of US global leadership. Claim five (globalization furthers the spread of democracy in the world) ascended to new heights with the hard-power mission of ‘building democracy’ in the Gap regions. The neoconservative commitment to ‘American values’ of freedom, security, and free markets made it necessary to add claim six (globalization requires a War on Terror) to globalism’s discursive arsenal. Robert Kaplan best captures the new logic of imperial globalism: ‘You have to have military and economic power behind it, or else your ideas cannot spread’ (Kaplan, 2003b).

But this changing morphology of globalism raises the legitimate question of ideological continuity: how much of ‘neoliberalism’ remains in imperial globalism? After all, in recent years, leading neoliberal voices like George Soros and Paul Krugman fiercely denounced the hard-power approach of neoconservatives. At first glance, then, it appears that there has been more of a split than a convergence between market globalism and imperial globalism, with some neoliberal globalist elites openly expressing both their dislike for and mistrust of the unilateralist imperialist drive of the Bush government. After all, they argued, their 1990s brand of globalism had been very different from its imperial version: fundamentally multilateral, it

was strongly committed to the mutual effort of creating military stability, a transnational trade regime, and comprehensive international treaties (see Soros, 2003; Krugman, 2003).

There is no question that a number of prominent neoliberals have refused to make ideological compromises with neoconservatives, especially on the subject of unilateralism. Combining their hands-off attitude toward Big Business with intrusive government action for the regulation of the ordinary citizenry in the name of public security and traditional values, neoconservatives have advocated a more assertive and expansive use of both economic and military power than neoliberals—ostensibly for the purpose of promoting freedom and democracy around the world. These sentiments seem to imply a strong commitment to universalistic principles, but, as one commentator puts it,

Unlike liberal Wilsonians, their [neoconservatives'] promotion of democracy is not for the sake of democracy and human rights in and of themselves. Rather, democracy-promotion is meant to bolster America's security and to further its world preeminence; it is thought to be pragmatically related to the U.S. national interest. The principles of these neocons[ervatives] are universalistic, but not so their policy, which steers clear of international organizations and is nationalist and unilateralist. (Wolfson, 2004; see also Lind, 2004)

On the other hand, it is crucial to bear in mind that neoliberalism and neoconservatism in the United States are not ideological opposites. In fact, they represent variations on the same liberal theme, and their similarities often outweigh their differences. Contemporary American neoconservatives are far removed from classical British traditionalists who expressed a fondness for aristocratic virtues and bemoaned radical social change, disliked egalitarian principles, and distrusted progress and reason. Rather, American neoconservatives subscribe to a variant of liberalism they relate to the world views espoused by Ronald Reagan, Theodore Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln, and James Madison.

In fact, the militaristic display put on at the 2004 Democratic Convention in Boston showed that despite persisting differences with the Bush administration's crude unilateralism, prominent neoliberals like John Kerry and Hilary Rodham Clinton have embraced large portions of the Republican hard-power security agenda, including the neoconservative dogma that the United States does not 'ask anybody's permission' in pursuit of its national interests. Finally, on major issues of economic globalization such as trade liberalization, deregulation, and privatization, the ideological differences between neoliberals and neoconservatives have been negligible for years. Like the late nineteenth-century context that gave rise to American imperialism, the post-9/11 landscape seems to call for a hard-power globalism that unites the twin goals of global economic and political hegemony in the name of high-sounding ideals like strength, security, just peace, democracy, development, free markets, and free trade.

Overall, then, my argument in favor of considerable ideological continuity between 1990s market globalism and 2000s imperial globalism leaves room for the dangerous possibility of an ideological turn toward US nationalism and right-wing militarism. In my view, claim six best captures this ominous potential. On one hand, the claim that globalization requires a global war on terror attests to globalism's political responsiveness and conceptual flexibility—qualities that characterize mature political belief systems (for possible criteria of 'mature' ideologies, see Freedman, 2003). On the other hand, however, claim six possesses a paradoxical character. If global terror were no longer a major issue, it would disappear without doing damage to the overall conceptual coherence of globalism. Hence, it appears that claim six is a contingent one and thus *less important* than the previous five. If, however, the global War on Terror turns out to be a lengthy and intense engagement—as suggested by the Bush

administration—then it would become actually *more important* over time. No wonder, then, that some commentators who seize upon the second option have claimed to detect a dangerous turn of globalism toward fascism (Falk, 2003).

To be sure, throughout the 1990s there had been sinister warnings on the part of some cultural theorists that globalization was actually ‘Americanization’ or ‘McDonaldization’ in universalist and rationalist disguise (see, e.g., Latouche, 1996; Ritzer, 1993). But US unilateralism and belligerence in the wake of 9/11 constitutes a much more serious manifestation of the same phenomenon. Indeed, the problem with globalism’s turn toward nationalism has been as much conceptual as political. After all, bestowing meaning on ‘globalization’ by connecting it to the idea of a necessary global War on Terror has created serious logical contradictions. First, the globalists’ reliance on the coercive powers of the state to secure their project undermines both the idea of the ‘self-regulating market’ and the claim of historical ‘inevitability’. Second, the belligerent vision of enforcing ‘democracy’ and ‘freedom’ at gunpoint conflicts with the common understanding of liberty as absence of coercion. Third, as noted above, the Anglo-American unilateralism contradicts the cosmopolitan, universal spirit associated with the concept ‘globalization’—hence the criticism of ‘reformed’ neoliberals like George Soros.

In short, introducing claim six as an ideological pillar of globalism runs a considerable risk of causing irreparable damage to the political belief system. After all, the celebration of globalization in American imperialist terminology invites a conceptual contradiction that may eventually prove to be fatal to globalism. And yet, if the political issues of our time indeed favor an ideology that boldly arranges seemingly conflicting pieces of three major political belief systems—liberalism, conservatism, and nationalism—around the idea of ‘globalization’, then imperial globalism might actually achieve a level of ideological dominance unprecedented in modern history.

Notes

- 1 The terms ‘hard power’ and ‘soft power’ have been coined by Joseph S. Nye. However, the power dynamics in question have been described and analyzed in different terms by generations of political thinkers influenced by the writings of Antonio Gramsci. For the latest elaboration of his perspective on power, see Nye (2004).
- 2 As I point out in these studies, these power elites consist chiefly of corporate managers, executives of large transnational corporations (TNCs), corporate lobbyists, high-level military officers, prominent journalists and public-relations specialists, intellectuals writing to a large public audience, state bureaucrats and influential politicians. It is questionable whether these social elites constitute a coherent ‘transnational capitalist class’ (in an orthodox Marxist sense), as Leslie Sklair suggests. In my view, Mark Rupert’s neo-Gramscian concept of a ‘transnational historic bloc of internationally-oriented capitalists, liberal statesman, and their allies’ seems to come closer to an accurate description of the loose, heterogeneous, and often disagreeing global alliance of neoliberal forces that I have in mind (see Sklair, 2001; Rupert, 2000, pp. 16–17, 154).
- 3 A *BusinessWeek*–Harris poll on globalization conducted by Harris Interactive between 7 and 10 April 2000 found that 65% of 1,024 American respondents thought that globalization was a ‘good thing’ for consumers and businesses in both the United States and the rest of the world. More recent polls are still showing a slim majority holding these views. For example, a 2004 University of Maryland Center on Policy Attitudes poll shows that slightly more than 50% of respondents saw globalization as ‘positive’ or ‘somewhat positive’. At the same time, however, this number confirms a significant decline in positive attitudes since the late 1990s. See http://americans-world.org/digest/global_issues/globalization?gz_summary.cfm.
- 4 Walter Russell Mead argues rather convincingly that the military and economic dimensions of Nye’s ‘hard power’ concept are sufficiently different to warrant separate terms. Thus he refers to military power as ‘sharp power’, and to economic power as ‘sticky power’, which he defines as a more coercive ‘sort of soft power’ comprised ‘by a set of economic institutions and policies that attracts others toward U.S. influence and then traps them in it’ (see Mead, 2004, pp. 46–53).
- 5 For example, at the G-8 Summit in Genoa, the Italian government employed a contingent of over 16,000 police and military troops to ‘guarantee the safety’ of delegates who pondered new neoliberal measures.

- 6 Joseph Nye (2004, p. ix) reports that Secretary Rumsfeld responded to a question about the relevance of 'soft power' in the US foreign policy by claiming that he did not know what the term meant.
- 7 The post-9/11 literature on the power dynamics of 'American Empire' is vast and rapidly growing (see, e.g., Johnson, 2004; Boggs, 2004; Todd, 2003; Soros, 2003; Schmemmann, 2003; Mann, 2003; Harvey, 2003). Michael Walzer, for example, suggests that the post-9/11 American empire constitutes a 'new beast' characterized by 'a looser form of rule, less authoritarian than empire is or was, more dependent on the agreement of others'. At the same time, Walzer acknowledges the administration's shift to hard power by conceding that 'George W. Bush's unilateralism is a bid for hegemony without compromise; perhaps he sees America playing an imperial—perhaps also messianic—role in the world' (see Walzer, 2003, pp. 27–30).
- 8 Columbia University economist Xavier Sala i-Martin argues that his evidence shows that inequality of individuals across the world is declining; but according to World Bank economist Branko Milanovic, global inequality has risen (see Secor, 2003).

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