A GRAND UNIFIED THEORY OF WORLD POLITICS: THE STABILITY IMPERATIVE
AND REIFYING IMAGINED COMMUNITIES IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY

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A GRAND UNIFIED THEORY OF WORLD POLITICS: THE STABILITY IMPERATIVE
AND REIFYING IMAGINED COMMUNITIES IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

The emerging global structure is wrought with tension. The contemporary international system, marshaled by the communications-and-information revolution and characterized by dense interaction capacities among transnational actors, can be conceived as a global society wherein a common normative framework guides and constrains state behavior. Its intersection with revisionist rising powers harboring intentions to mold that framework to reflect their own preferences risks an ambiguous standard of behavior, confusion, and a clash of norms that threatens to transform the cohesion that underpins accord in the global society into chaos. As the state upon whose values and principles the existing international system is based upon, it is the responsibility of the United States to ensure the stability and viability of that system and – as far as other states are expected to conform to the normative standards thereof – its ability to accommodate the development of the states within it. The United States has traditionally promoted the democratic peace as the key stabilizing mechanism in the international system. While fully institutionalized democracies may be more stable and less aggressive than other forms of government, however, emerging democracies tend to be extraordinarily violent as self-rule precipitates secessionist wars, pathological homogenization, and ethnic cleansing as “the people” are defined and those excluded are sorted out. In regions beset by the legacies of colonialism and multi-ethnic empires, wherein state boundaries were arbitrarily drawn to aggregate and divide a complex mosaic of social identity groups, the results are national cascades fueling pervasive identity-driven conflict in a struggle to reify into the primary organizing structure of modernity: the nation-state.
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INTRODUCTION

WROUGHT WITH TENSION

This is the theory of everything. This thesis will present a prism that reflects the “levels of analysis” or “images” of politics as a coherent and dynamic system. Traditional international relations (IR) theories compartmentalize the global structure into discrete images of human behavior, domestic state systems, and an international arrangement – each of which has a distinct effect on global politics. In contemporary global society, however, the density of transnational interactions is such that these images are not isolated but systemic, integrated, and interdependent. Rather than compartmentalized levels of analysis, the global society is instead a functionally differentiated system in which individuals, states, and international actors all have salient effects on each other. As such, political science (the institutional design and policies of government), comparative politics (the effect of domestic political systems on conflict and development), IR theory (the determinants of international behavior), anthropology (the drivers and characterization of human behavior), and sociology (the development of human societies) are treated here as indistinguishable and integral.

While the global structure does not comprise separate planes of existence, neither is it a monolith. Chapter 1 explores the global structure as a differentiated social system. Such a prism that uses the myriad of theoretical frameworks to describe the different iterations and arrangements of global politics enables the synthesis of major concepts from literature across the spectrum of IR theory. The conceptualization of a functionally differentiated global structure – consisting of an international system of units interacting upon a geopolitically ordered environment – enables a reconciliation of paradigmatic schools in a coherent manner.

Given such an architecture, Chapter 2 will investigate the nature of the contemporary global structure, characterized by “globalization” and rising powers. Globalization is the process marshaled by the communications-and-information revolution by which broadening transnational networks facilitate increasing interaction
capacity, interdependence, and integration. The effect is an international system expressed as a global society wherein a shared normative framework underpins accord. Within such a global society, revisionist rising powers with intentions to mold that framework to reflect their own preferences risk an ambiguous standard of behavior, confusion, and a clash of norms that threatens to transform the cohesion that enables consistent interactions in the global society into chaos. Thus, international stability is the key pacifying mechanism in the contemporary global structure.

Over the past 75 years, the United States has held sacred the democratic peace theory as the key pacifying mechanism in the global structure. Instead of moderating volatility in the strategic environment, however, premature and forced-pace democratization exacerbates it. While established democracies may be more pacific than other forms of governments, emerging democracies tend to be extraordinarily violent — this is the focus of Chapter 3. Democratic processes enable the social closure required to construct and define an exclusionary national identity in an environment wherein government capacity to provide public goods and services equitably may not yet exist. The result is fierce political competition among social identity groups for those low-density, high-demand resources. When political factions are formed around ascriptive fixed-identity markers — such as ethnicity, religion, race, tribe, language, region, bloodlines, or other traditional identity ties — group members are restricted from moving from one faction to another.\(^5\) The political majority and minority crystalize, and the political system turns brittle as a rigid ruling regime becomes synonymous with the state while disenfranchised factions are denied the possibility of gaining political power.\(^6\)

Without a stake in the state, excluded groups often resort to violence to change the system, while the ruling elite represses the revolutionary groups. Rather than moderate aggression, then, premature democratization exacerbates it.

Chapter 4 disputes the common narrative that such violence and instability pervading much of the post-colonial developing world is a function of state fragmentation — instead, the primary mechanism is cascading nation-state formation. Establishing a correspondence between the nation and the state is an inherently exclusionary process; it requires the state to construct a national identity and its
boundaries – who does and who does not belong to the nation. Catalyzed by premature democratization overlaid upon the legacies of colonialism and multiethnic empires, this dynamic is fueling a sorting-out process among the mosaic of social identity groups diffused throughout developing regions in a struggle to consolidate discretely into the organizing social structure demanded by modernity: the nation-state. In an environment wherein colonial powers arbitrarily or manipulatively drew administrative borders dissecting and aggregating identities in such a way that indigenous peoples would be unable to form cohesive political identities with which to challenge colonial authority, such nation-state formation requires the massive exercise of coercive power as people are displaced; identity groups are assimilated, repressed, or cleansed; and nations are sorted out. This modernization process driving instability throughout much of the post-colonial developing world mirrors the violent historical processes that occurred during national cascades in Western Europe during the Wars of Religion and in Eastern Europe during the decline and fall of multiethnic empires.

Chapter 5 leverages the realities of the contemporary global society to sketch the agenda for a grand strategy that reinforces the stability imperative and addresses the core social drivers of conflict from national cascades. National cascades are occurring, and they are as violent as they have ever been. While the ability of foreign powers to transform such chaos is limited, the developed world should marshal its resources to mitigate the human suffering inherent in these processes as much as possible. Nation-states are intricately connected to identity-driven conflict, and instability is highly concomitant with fragile states; to strengthen the state, one must strengthen the nation – but to strengthen the nation, one must strengthen the state. Not a catch-22, this should instead be conceptualized as an iterative process. The essential first step in this effort is to demilitarize the conception of stabilization. Foreign powers cannot grant self-determination, but they can ensure a degree of human security for non-combatants, protect the dignity of displaced persons, and provide development aid to encourage good governance. Good governance is not an endogenous result of elections; rather elections should be the capstone achievement of good governance. The development of such good government is a long-term process that requires pragmatic engagement not ideological
intervention. While state-making and nation-building are not cheap or easy, neither are prolonged military operations. This is the tragedy of a crusading democracy.

While foreign military intervention is limited in its effectiveness to mitigate the violence inherent to national cascades, this does not abrogate the United States of its responsibility to ensure the viability of the international system. As the state upon whose values and principles the existing international system was based, this is the responsibility of the United States. Moreover, to the extent that other states are expected to conform to the normative standards thereof, the United States is accountable for its ability to accommodate the development of those states.

As other powers rise and international networks continue to globalize, the global order is becoming more democratic, but that does not mean democracy should define the international system. Liberalism in IR theory can be conceived as a transplantation of domestically held and nurtured ideals of democratic procedures onto the international system. Just as democratization is a destabilizing force in domestic societies, then, the democratization of a diverse global society is cause for grave concern. Thus, it is vital to foster crosscutting cleavages; develop overlapping alliance blocs, organizations, and regimes; and encourage transnational interactions to cultivate a stable pluralistic society.

Western-oriented political science and international relations disciplines are overly concerned with order in their “own house.” This preoccupation is “justified” with the fundamental observation that only the “major powers” have the capacity and capability to unilaterally affect the world's political relations in meaningful ways. The resulting “parsimony” of structure resulting from the “reduction” in the number of relevant actors is “useful” but it is not accurate and does not contribute to meaningful analysis; it is reductionist in the same way as an understanding of the system based primarily on the “sum of its parts.”

The emerging global structure is wrought with tension. The intersection of rising powers and transnational networks is generating the potential for a clash of norms in an environment wherein routine interactions underpin the world economy and global accord, driving a growing criticality for such consistency and shared norms of behavior – international stability. The post-Cold War peace dividend afforded U.S. foreign policy elites the freedom to continue their obsession with the democratic peace despite the destabilizing effects of forced-pace democratization – the peace dividend now appears to
be spent.\textsuperscript{13} The violence manifest today throughout regions consisting of post-colonial fragile states is an historical process inherent to modernizing regions whereby social identities sort themselves out into homogenous nation-states. This is occurring today throughout much of the Middle East and Africa.

In Iraq, the U.S. intervened and occupied, and the result was a costly disaster. In Libya, the U.S. intervened and did not occupy, and the result was a costly disaster. In Syria, the U.S. neither intervened nor occupied, and the result was a costly disaster. . . . If the Middle East is bent on convulsing itself in costly disasters . . . trying to play a constructive role from the sidelines rather than getting embroiled directly represents not weakness but prudence.\textsuperscript{14}

Indeed, international credibility requires more than simply the use of overwhelming military force to meet challenges – it also requires wisdom, prudence, and not making terrible foreign policy decisions. To address the core social drivers of pervasive identity-driven conflict, the United States must demilitarize its conception of stabilization and instead provide palliative humanitarian assistance to ensure human security and attenuate the human suffering inherent to such national cascades. While military force may be required in the short term to protect fundamental human rights, enforce an environment wherein human security is safeguarded, and enable security sector reform, any such military intervention must be buttressed by a comprehensive and contextually aware development program. Such a program can address the underlying social determinants of instability by guiding the construction of robust, inclusive institutions to provide public goods and services equitably across all salient social identity groups, building national legitimacy, encouraging crosscutting cleavages and overlapping affiliations to build bridges across identity divides, and fostering social learning and cross-identity affinities. In such a way, the boundaries of political identity will begin to shift from ascriptive, fixed markers to fluid ones such as class, geography, and ideology. As such, identity loses its existential character, politics shifts from a zero-sum to a positive-sum game, and an overarching national identity fosters more stable, high-capacity states. In this way, the United States can resolve the tension between the stability imperative and the conflict endemic to regions consisting of fragile states by replacing hubris with humility and acknowledging both its responsibility and limited ability to pacify national cascades.
CHAPTER I

BLIND MEN AND ELEPHANTS

FROM MONOLITH TO MODERN: DIFFERENTIATION IN THE GLOBAL STRUCTURE

The world is an elephant. It sits in a room surrounded by blind men. One man, touching the elephant’s trunk, describes it as long, cylindrical, and prehensile. Another describes the elephant as rigid, smooth, and convex like a helmet – he can reach the elephant’s toenail. Still a third man feels its tail; he describes the elephant as spindly and snakelike with a coarse puff of hair at the end. Separately, none of the men accurately describe the elephant – they know only fragments, and these fragments are reflected in their perception of reality. They debate and adamantly defend their own empirically reached conclusions about their perceptions, but only in aggregate can these men begin to comprehend the creature in the room before them. In the same way, the world of IR is an elephant, and theoretical paradigms are blind men.²

While few scholars or practitioners subscribe exclusively to any one school of thought within IR theory, paradigms nonetheless are often perceived as incompatible and in competition; this dichotomy is false.³ Rather than comprising an irreconcilable rivalry over the characteristics and laws governing the global structure reflecting ideological viewpoints along a spectrum, these theoretical archetypes instead describe distinct elements of the global structure that, in sum, comprise a comprehensive and nuanced framework for international relations.⁴ Rather than the “classical conceptual model of a whole that consists of parts and relations between parts,” differentiation of the global structure assumes an intimate interplay between environmental factors and system components.⁵ Accordingly, the global structure can be disaggregated into the geopolitical order – the distribution of power among states within a given international society – and the international system – the institutional arrangements, processes, and norms that guide and constrain behavioral patterns and interactions among and within states.
Differentiation, however, is not a concept that is widely integrated into international relations. While fundamental in sociology and anthropology, IR remains more closely bound to political science and economics – two disciplines in which differentiation is rarely discussed because such differentiation already has occurred in the modern polities about which they theorize. But international relations is not merely about policy; rather it is about social behavior and the human condition in a given environment and in a given moment, the nature of international society, and the social arrangements that influence those interactions. Indeed mutual recognition, which presupposes social interaction and in turn society, is a fundamental element of the modern sovereign states system that is the bedrock of international affairs. Thus, international relations shares just as much or more with sociology and anthropology as it does with political science or economics, and differentiation promises to provide a coherent framework to structure the “notoriously fragmented debates about IR theory.”

Differentiation as a process involves sequential evolution along a continuum encompassing three forms that each represent increased complexity: segmentary, stratifactory, and functional.* Indeed, classic modernization theory defines modernity as the point at which social structures differentiate and specialize based upon function – society transitions from stratifactory to functional differentiation.

While no one would dispute that segmentation continues to play a very important role as the form of differentiation of the political system of world society into territorial states, other forms of differentiation also play an important role within the political system. World politics is stratified, both in a formal sense through the prime responsibility of the UN Security Council for the preservation of peace, and in an informal sense through the claims of great powers to translate the unequal distribution of powers into special roles and privileges. It is functionally differentiated, both in the more narrow sense of role differentiation (some states serving as leaders or providers of collective goods, others as followers or neutral states etc.) and in a more general sense in that political communication and decision making are increasingly structured along functionally defined issue areas in the form of international regimes such as the climate regime, the free trade regime etc. In fact, one could argue that most of

* As described by Buzan and Albert, Segmentary differentiation occurs where each subsystem is equal and functionally similar to each other. Stratifactory differentiation occurs where there is a hierarchal order among system components. And functional differentiation occurs where subsystems are designed to specialize in a particular sector or to perform a specific function. Barry Buzan and Mathias Albert, “Differentiation: A Sociological Approach to International Relations Theory,” *European Journal of International Relations* 16, no. 3 (2010): 418-19.
the process of ‘global governance’ can be understood in terms of a restructuring of the political systems in terms of functionally defined problem solving. Indeed, the global structure can be conceived as in transition to functional differentiation – a modernization process mirroring that of national states.

As international society has modernized, so too have IR theories. Whereas realist frameworks generally correspond to stratifactory differentiation, idealist paradigms tend to theorize about functional differentiation. Thus, realist theories describe quite well the anarchic and hierarchical geopolitical order, and idealist theories explain quite well the functional components of the international system. Far from being dichotomistic, then, realism and idealism are instead complementary as they describe both the transition of global structure from stratifactory to functional differentiation, and they enable a comprehensive exploration of both the geopolitical environment and the international system.

ANARCHY: THE GEOPOLITICAL ORDER

The geopolitical order within the global structure characterizes the environment within which states operate. The basic construct of this environment is that it is anarchic – there is no Hobbesian leviathan to govern the relationships among or behavior of states within the structure. There is, however, a hierarchical distribution of

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* The realist tradition traces its roots through Thucydides, Niccolò Machiavelli, and Thomas Hobbes. Its core principles include the centrality of group cohesion – currently in the form of the state – and the security dilemma created by perceptions and misperceptions among groups; the idea that states and leaders are driven by narrow self-interest; the resulting anarchic and self-help nature of the international system; and the primacy of power politics and drive for security. William C. Wohlforth, “Realism,” in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, eds. Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 132-33.

† As opposed to realist theories, idealist models in international relations stress that the moral and ethical principles of a country should be reflected in its foreign policy and in the international system. The most influential theoretical framework within the contemporary idealist tradition is liberalism, which traces its roots to Immanuel Kant, Hugo Grotius, and John Locke. Liberalism posits that rational actors and the ability of people to cooperate can restrain the use of force and construct a peaceful society. The core principles of liberalism are (1) the democratic peace – democracies will rarely fight or threaten each other and are more peaceful with other kinds of societies; (2) international trade – sustained interactions foster understanding and empathy, and trade depends on expectations of peace and stability; and (3) international organizations – transnational agencies shape norms, mediate conflicting parties, and generate narratives of mutual identification. Bruce Russet, “Liberalism,” in *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, 4th ed., eds. Tim Dunne, Milja Kirki, and Steve Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 69, 75-76.
power wherein states’ fundamental interests are determined. A state’s position in this hierarchy is a function of its aggregate power resources—including military, economic, geopolitical, leadership, prestige, credibility, and perception factors.

The distribution of power generates a balance, which seeks stability in the global structure—a function of peace and durability. The result is a pendulum effect wherein the distribution of power is prone to periodic shifts between hegemonic dominance, equilibrium, and power vacuum. A hegemonic balance of power will manifest unipolarity. A unipolar balance of power is one in which a single power asserts its dominance over international society. Such a powerful state will design the international system to reflect its set of preferences, using the threat or use of force and provision of public goods to coerce weaker states into cooperation—take for instance the United States’ Marshall Plan to provide significant development aid to reconstruct Europe as liberal and capitalist following World War II. The hegemon, then, uses its power to impose order and bolster stability. Perhaps peaceful, however, a unipolar balance of power is not durable. Indeed, the costs associated with providing a disproportionate level of public goods and the tendency for bandwagoning states to free ride on the benefits of the hegemon’s security guarantee generate differential growth rates whereby rising powers will grow faster than the hegemon. This uneven growth is exacerbated by the “sameness effect,” whereby competitors will imitate the hegemon’s successful characteristics and policies. Indeed, by definition, great powers perform similar functions—functional differentiation among them is impossible, requiring each great power aspirant to adopt similar policies. Finally, the competitiveness of the global environment often drives weaker nations to form alliances to balance against the hegemon; thus the hegemon is forced to expend greater resources to maintain the same relative power distribution. Accordingly, unipolarity is momentary.

* Rare, indeed, in the history of the modern world is an example of unipolarity. Perhaps one example, however, can be found in France’s position in Western Europe between the 1660 Treaty of Pyrenees, which ended the war between France and Spain, and the rise of England and Hapsburg Austria in the early eighteenth century. When Louis XIV ascended to the throne of France in 1659, France was unrivaled in population, military strength, or administrative means to mobilize. King Louis XIV leveraged the strength of the whole population by mobilizing it in times of war, bringing the military under the control of central administration, and creating a standing and professional army; this military revolution facilitated French hegemony. Such
Should one power reach parity, the order would become bipolar – the least stable power distribution of all, neither peaceful nor durable. The bipolar order will manifest a hegemonic struggle as each power competes for superiority over the other. In a contemporary bipolar order, the existence of a primary and existential nuclear threat provides strategic focus, forcing each adversary to intimately understand the motivations of the other and enabling them to more effectively signal their intentions, reducing the risk of misperception and uncertainty, resolving the security dilemma, enabling deterrence, and muting the struggle. The dynamics inherent in such a struggle, however, generate an unstable contradiction whereby the international society will bifurcate into blocs. Such rigid alliances leave little room for diplomacy or strategic maneuvering and foster an existentially threatening zero-sum game. In such an environment, one power ultimately will emerge as the sole superpower, whereby its norms and preferences will govern behavior within the global structure and cycle the world back into a unipolar moment.

The scenario becomes more complex, however, when multiple powers reach parity. Multipolarity is inherently more durable than either uni- or bipolarity, as to

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* Thucydides’ exploration of the Peloponnesian War represents the classic structural dynamics governing the bipolar balance of power. The previous war with Persia had stimulated growth in Athens while simultaneously causing the reigning hegemon, Sparta, to retreat in isolation. The Greeks, anticipating struggle, began to form alliances, bifurcating the Greek system into rigid blocs. Following a series of diplomatic engagements between Athens and Sparta that failed to resolve the zero-sum tension, Sparta – fearing an overthrow of a favorable balance of power in the Greek system – delivered an ultimatum that forced Athens to declare war. The Peloponnesian War was the resulting hegemonic struggle between Athens and Sparta for dominance in the Greek system. The tragedy of the war is that in its aftermath, both Athens and Sparta were decimated to the point where a third actor, Macedonia, rose as the dominant power in Greece. Robert Gilpin. “The Theory of Hegemonic War.” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18, no. 4 (Spring 1988): 598-599, 601.
transform the order, multiple powers would need to fall without another rising. Indeed, the modern global order remained multipolar from its founding after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 until the end of World War II in 1945. Despite such durability, however, the specific constellation of states comprising the great powers was in constant flux. Durability did not, then, necessarily translate to peace. Because there is not a single threat to provide strategic focus, great powers are less able to discern intentions, and even minor actions are likely to generate fear, exacerbating the security dilemma. Rather than providing deterrence, actions to increase one state’s security will increase the likelihood that its actions will be perceived as threatening by others, driving other states to respond by increasing their own security, which is in turn viewed as threatening by the first state. Thus, Schelling’s Dilemma – states are incentivized to strike first while they have a strategic advantage. In a multipolar environment, the host of powers diminishes the ability of a state to attune to a single adversary and understand its motives and capabilities. The resulting multitude of threats increases complexity and decreases focus, amplifying the opportunity for misperceptions among powers caught in a prisoner’s dilemma, likely to cause a spiral of unintended consequences, self-fulfilling prophecy, and conflict escalation. While the mere presence of nuclear weapons provide

*“In the Prisoner’s Dilemma game, there are two players. Each has two choices, namely cooperate or defect. Each must make the choice without knowing what the other will do. No matter what the other does, defection yields a higher payoff than cooperation. The dilemma is that if both defect, both do worse than if both had cooperated.” Robert Axelrod, The Evolution of Cooperation, rev. ed. (New York: Basic Books, [1984] 2006), 7-8.

† In 1815, the Treaty of Paris institutionalized multipolarity with a treaty system that acknowledged a host of European great powers – Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, Russia, and France – and tied them together in a complex web of alliances known as the Concert of Europe. In addition to the Congress of Vienna, which would convene the great powers to resolve crises peacefully, a key structural mechanism to ensure stability in multipolar Europe was the existence of the German Confederation, which was cohesive enough to discourage attacks across it or imperial designs on it but too divided to pose a threat itself. The German unification and aggressive nature of Kaiser Wilhelm II nullified the stabilizing influence of the German Confederation and aggravated the security dilemma in Europe. Such a security dilemma became acute in the July Crisis of 1914 after a Serb nationalist assassinated the heir to the Austria-Hungarian throne. In response, the Germany-backed Austria-Hungary Empire issued an ultimatum to Russia-backed Serbia, and Russia decided to partially mobilize its military forces. Consistent with Schelling’s Dilemma, Germany knew that Russia and France would align with each other and that such an alliance would overpower Germany. Given the slow speed of Russia’s mobilization capacity, then, a first strike was strategically advantageous for Germany – the Schlieffen Plan whereby Germany would strike and defeat France, then quickly divert to defend its eastern front before Russia had a chance to complete its mobilization. To Germany, then, Russian mobilization was tantamount to war. As such, when Russia began full military mobilization on July 31, Germany’s Schlieffen Plan was triggered, and World War I began. Marc Trachtenberg, “The Meaning of Mobilization in 1914,” International Security 15, no. 3 (Winter 1991-
a fragile stability in a bipolar order, the complexities of multiple powers vying for influence along various friction points produce an environment wherein it is far more difficult to discern intentions, and nuclear-capable powers are more likely to strike first, risking nuclear war.²⁵

**MITIGATING ANARCHY: THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM**

A prisoner’s dilemma does not invariably produce conflict, however, and the chaotic nature of international anarchy can be attenuated by mitigating factors and constraining mechanisms that interact to govern the behavioral patterns in the global structure. Such systems affect both the strategy of the players involved and the rules of the game to moderate the behavior of states in pursuit of their fundamental interests.²⁶ Thus, beyond simply the character of the global order, the nature of the international system plays a crucial role in communicating intentions, shaping perceptions and expectations, and ensuring accord in the global structure.

**CONSTRAINING MECHANISMS**

In an international system, there are a number of specific mechanisms that interact to form arrangements that constrain state behavior. These constraining mechanisms represent functional differentiation of the global structure. Indeed, “politics is an extraordinarily complex . . . set of phenomena” involving myriad “types of units [and] many thousands of possible types of relations.”²⁷ The result is an eclectic array of strategies, procedures, and institutional arrangements designed, both *de jure* and *de facto*, by great powers according to the nature of the geopolitical environment, as well as shaping the character of that environment in a feedback loop.²⁸

Liberal internationalist mechanisms are derived from the theories of Immanuel Kant and place particular emphasis on Kant’s pillar that republican states rarely fight or threaten each other and are inherently more peaceful than states with other forms of government.²⁹ This article of perpetual peace is the foundation of the democratic peace

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The premise of liberal internationalism is to transpose domestic liberal values onto the international system, thus creating a community of liberal states and reducing aggressive behavior. Moderate liberal internationalism rejects an insular, isolationist foreign policy while simultaneously recognizing that “in a world in which people are organized in national communities a purely cosmopolitan ideal is unrealistic.” Liberal internationalists are the ultimate pragmatists and steep their strategy in moderation; “power is not good or bad per se. . . . More is not always better.” They seek active engagement, and they avoid intervention, to “combine resources into successful strategies in the new context of power diffusion.” Their creed is smart power, which takes advantage of both the coercive effects of hard power and the shaping effects of soft power. A strategy steeped in ideology, however, tempts universalist liberal interventionism to “remake the world in the” liberal image. Taken to the extreme, this can manifest a potent, moralistic crusade to promote “the principles of liberty and democracy” using “military power as a tool for defending and advancing moralistic and idealistic causes.”

A second mechanism to constrain the behavior of states is based on another pillar of Kant’s guide to perpetual peace: “federation of . . . states,” or multinational organizations. These institutions are developed by self-interested states to solve the prisoner’s dilemma and promote collaboration in relationships where security dilemmas exists and trust is lacking but common or complementary interests make cooperation mutually beneficial. In the aftermath of hegemonic war, the victor is burdened with the responsibility of restoring international order. Faced with a multitude of strategy options, the state can pursue a strategy of preponderance, using its coercive power to dominate a unipolar hegemonic order and inviting significant balancing reactions as weaker states perceive a threatening hegemon; a strategy of isolation, fading into its fortress of insularity and abandoning other states to their own devices; or a strategy of “acquiescence and participation in a mutually acceptable post-war order” that is durable, legitimate, and designed to “serve the long-term interests of the leading state.” By exercising strategic restraint, the victor can signal to weaker states its intent to construct
a mutually beneficial order and encourage those states to bandwagon with it rather than balance against it.\textsuperscript{39}

[An institutional] settlement involves a bargain: the leading state gets a predictable and legitimate order based on agreed-upon rules and institutions. It obtains the acquiescence in this order by weaker states, which in turn allows it to conserve its power. In return, the leading state agrees to limits on its own actions and to open itself up to a political process in which the weaker states can actively press their interests upon the more powerful state. The... leading state agrees to forego some gains in the early postwar period in exchange for rules and institutions that allow it to have stable returns later, while weaker states are given favorable returns up front and limits on the exercise of power. Institutions play a two-sided role: they must bind the leading state when it is initially stronger and the subordinate states later when they are stronger.\textsuperscript{40}

Liberal institutionalist strategies involve achieving cooperation in the international system through proto-leviathan functional organizations and multilateral regimes – such as the United Nations, various regional security alliances, international development banks, universal human rights conventions, the free trade regime, etc. – to institutionalize rules and promote a shared normative framework.\textsuperscript{41} The resulting behavioral norms are socialized through structured, repeated interaction and incentivize states to "act according to defined and predictable rules and modi operandi," thus reducing uncertainty and the risk of misperception and enabling robust international interaction, negotiation, and bargaining.\textsuperscript{42}

Such international interaction buttresses Kant’s third pillar of perpetual peace, the final liberal constraining mechanism: “cosmopolitan right” or neoliberal interdependence.\textsuperscript{43} Such interdependence is characterized by the existence of multiple channels to connect countries – including interstate, transgovernmental, and transnational ties – and of multiple issues that are not arranged hierarchically, deemphasizing the universal dominance of military security and blurring the distinction between domestic and foreign policy.\textsuperscript{44} The result of such integration is (1) iterative interaction that shapes perceptions, enabling states to credibly signal intentions in context, reduce misperceptions, and drive behavioral norms; and (2) further integration

\footnote{“Interstate relations are the normal channels assumed by realists. Transgovernmental applies when we relax the realist assumption that states act coherently as units; transnational applies when we relax the assumption that states are the only [salient] units” in international politics. Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., \textit{Power and Interdependence}, 4th ed. (Boston: Longman, [1997] 2012), 20. (Italics in original)}
that increases the costs and benefits of one state's policies upon others. Indeed, given that armed conflict disrupts transnational economic activity that is vital to states' national interests, the costs of such aggressive behavior rises and its likelihood is reduced among states belonging to the global economy – the “Dell Theory.” To neoliberals, “patterns of interdependent preferences belong among the most fundamental structures influencing state behavior.”

Of course, the simplest mechanism to constrain state behavior in an anarchical geopolitical environment is deterrence. Unilateral deterrence is the “diplomacy of violence,” coercive bargaining “based on the power to hurt,” and the “latent violence that can influence someone’s choice—violence that can still be withheld or inflicted, or that a victim believes can be withheld or inflicted.” Such unilateral deterrence served as a foundational strategy in the Cold War – mutual assured destruction – but it is far less effective in a multilateral setting where interactions are diffused rather than focused and iterative, and the risk of misperception increases. In such an environment, states are less able to signal intentions in context, and potential adversaries are more likely to react according to the spiral model rather than deterrence theory. To resolve such cognitive dissonance in a multilateral environment, states rely on alliances to deter potential adversaries. Alliance blocs reduce the complexity of multilateral environments by aggregating a multitude of powers into a single entity, thus artificially restructuring the diffused nature of interactions in a multipolar order to increase strategic focus. Alliances form in a number of ways. Balancing behavior is when “states form alliances in order to prevent stronger powers from dominating them.” Weaker states will join together to

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*Deterrence theory holds that if an aggressor believes its adversaries are weak in capability or commitment, it will “test its opponents, usually starting with a small . . . issue. If the [victims] retreat, they . . . will encourage the aggressor to press harder. . . . To avoid this disastrous situation, the state must display the ability and willingness to wage war.” The spiral model, on the other hand, is derived from the “consequences of living in a Hobbesian state of nature. . . . Arms procured to defend can usually be used to attack. . . . When states seek the ability to defend themselves, they get too much and too little—too much because they gain the ability to carry out aggression; too little because others, being menaced, will increase their own arms and so reduce the first state's security. . . . Since both sides obey the same imperatives, attempts to increase one's security by standing firm and accumulating arms will be self-defeating. . . . If much of deterrence theory can be seen in terms of the game of Chicken, the spiral theorists are more impressed with the relevance of the Prisoner’s Dilemma.” Robert Jervis, *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 58, 62-67.*
balance a stronger power because (1) a strong hegemon could pose an existential threat and make an unreliable ally and (2) joining the side in greater need of assistance could maximize its influence within the alliance. Bandwagoning behavior, on the other hand, rests on the premise that “states are attracted to strength. The more powerful the state and the more clearly this power is demonstrated, the more likely others are to ally with it.” This occurs not only as a form of appeasement but also to share in the benefits of the system designed and dominated by the hegemonic state.

**Complexes and Societies**

Constellations of these constraining mechanisms manifest state societies, within which system elements and participants interact to guide the behavior of states.* Structural state societies, or *security complexes*, are the result of alliance dynamics among “a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national security concerns cannot realistically be considered apart from one another.” They provide a “real assurance that the members of that complex will not fight each other physically, but will settle their disputes in some other way”; they reduce the opportunity for aggressive behavior. Security complexes can occur independently as an unintended consequence of alliance dynamics, but they also can be deliberately designed to manipulate power relationships to produce an artificial geopolitical balance among a group of states. Such a complex requires a mechanism, such as an offshore balancer, that maintains an obligation to this equilibrium.† Moreover, advancing a shared narrative to foster a common value system and designing borders to

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* While it may be controversial to attribute agency to collective constructs such as states, from an empirical sense, states are simply the conduit through which diplomatic and foreign-policy elites exercise agency. Tim Dunne, “The English School,” in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, eds. Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 272–73.

† An offshore balancer is a great power that is not aligned with any single state, bloc, or ideology, but instead is committed to maintaining stability through ensuring a balance of power. An offshore balancer would calibrate its engagement according to the distribution of power and intervene militarily only when necessary to balance against a revolutionary power to maintain such an equilibrium. John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, “The Case for Offshore Balancing: A Superior U.S. Grand Strategy,” *Foreign Affairs* 95, no. 4 (July/August 2016): 71–73; Barry R. Posen, “Stability and Change in U.S. Grand Strategy,” *Orbis: A Journal of World Affairs* 51, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 565–66.
discourage the use of force incentivize states to self-select roles to tend the system and decrease the ability of a revolutionary state to change the system by force. Like any closed system, however, security complexes inevitably are prone to entropy and degradation. Over time, subsequent generations of leaders will fail to understand the underlying principles ensuring accord throughout the system. These leaders may take actions that foment misperceptions and aggravate the security dilemma, which encourages the formation of rigid alliances and leaves armed conflict the only available option to change the system or rearrange alliances.

A normative state society exists when “a group of states . . . have established by dialogue and consent common rules and institutions for the conduct of their relations, and recognize their common interest in maintaining these arrangements.” Whereas security complexes maintain order by limiting armed conflict, normative societies do so by encouraging cooperation. They reduce the incentive for aggressive behavior and are strengthened by interdependence of shared interests rather than interdependence of rivalry. As in any society, order is maintained by a shared sense of common interests “in achieving the elementary goals of social life.” Normative societies are formed organically among states with similar cultural, political, historical, or ideological social narratives. Such affinities generate bonds through which member states’ behaviors are

* For example, in 1815 the Treaty of Paris succeeded in facilitating a stable peace in Europe by reintegrating France and creating a treaty system that discouraged any hegemonic bids for European mastery. Aggression was discouraged by creating buffer states, intermediary bodies, and shared spheres of influence to facilitate cooperation and “tending”; manipulating the German Confederacy to eliminate the “spongy” center of Europe and create an area strong enough to dissuade attack but not cohesive enough to pose a threat itself; forming a shared normative cause against further liberalization; and fencing off Europe from extra-European conflicts. By the mid-1800s, however, German unification eliminated the unthreatening nature of the German Confederacy, precipitously increasing the security dilemma by magnitudes. While the security dilemma initially remained latent by the skilled statesmanship, web of alliances, and keen personal tending of German Chancellor Otto von Bismark, the ascent of the more aggressive and militaristic Kaiser Wilhelm II unleashed the acutely threatening nature of Germany. Until 1905, Germany was balanced by France and Russia. After France’s defeat in the Franco-Prussian war in 1871 and Russia’s defeat in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 weakened France and Russia respectively, however, Great Britain, as the offshore balancer, was educed to form the Triple Entente with Russia and France in 1907. With alliances hardened, and populist tension on the continent between transnational economic trends and increasing nationalist domestic sentiment at an all-time high, conflict became inevitable as the structural society that had maintained European stability since 1815 unraveled. Paul W. Schroeder, “The 19th-Century International System: Changes in the Structure,” *World Politics* 39, no. 1 (October 1986): 1-26; Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 78-218.
constrained by mutual recognition of common interests and guided by a shared normative framework. These rules are socially effective, rather than mere intellectual constructs, to the extent that institutional agents exist that make, communicate, interpret, enforce, legitimize, adapt, and protect those rules. Whereas liberal institutions are designed to expand liberal ideals and reinforce the interests of the leading state, institutional agents in a normative society can exist even in an anarchical society absent multinational organizations. While such organizations certainly can function as institutional agents, so too can states themselves. States make and legislate rules by signaling consent to interactional procedures that have been constructed via custom and iterative practice, which is only sometimes confirmed by conventions, treaty, or law. States communicate rules through statements and actions, administer them by behaving in accordance with them, provide their own interpretation of them, enforce them by punishing or ostracizing states who act contrary to them, legitimize them by employing power to mobilize support for them, change rules by demonstrating a withdraw of consent for the old rules in favor of new ones in response to changing circumstances, and protect them by collaborating to manage and maintain the arrangement and perpetuate the sense of common interests that underpins the society. Thus, state behavior in a normative society not only is constrained by structure but also guided by rules and norms.

The global structure cannot be conceived through a compartmentalized paradigm. It does not quarantine itself into accommodating levels-of-analysis between international system and national state, nor does it conveniently segregate into discrete images of human behavior, internal state structures, and international anarchy to enable parsimonious descriptions of the environment and separate explanations of the system that predict state behavior. Rather, it encompasses functionally differentiated systematic elements that interact in intricately interdependent ways depending on the nature of the environment in which they are situated. Consistent with realist and neorealist conceptions of international affairs, the distribution of power in the geopolitical environment yields a hierarchical geopolitical order that is the primary determinant of a state’s fundamental interests. Within such an environment, however, a
constellation of functionally differentiated elements, institutions, regimes, and agents comprise an international system to guide and constrain state behavior in pursuit of those fundamental interests. The nature of such a system can yield a security complex should the systemic functions aggregate into a society structured to constrain behavior, reduce the opportunity for aggression and balance rivalries. Alternatively, should system elements generate shared norms to guide behavior, reduce the desire for aggression, and encourage cooperation, the result is a normative state society.
CHAPTER 2

THE LONGUE DURÉE*

THE LONG PROCESS: TOWARD A GLOBAL SOCIETY

DIFFUSION AND GLOBALIZATION

The United States may not be in decline, but other states are on the rise. “The rise and fall of the great powers” represents cyclical historical events of civilizations that are universal to state societies. While the diffusion of power and the globalization that has fueled its diffusion are both revolutionary developments in the contemporary global structure, neither has heralded “the end of history.” Now, power once concentrated by pax-Americana is diffusing globally.

Globalization, indeed, is neither a modern phenomenon nor a destination.

Globalization . . . traces successive steps in what we might call the development of a planetary constitutional design. Whereas, one millennium ago, the human species was recognizably organized in some four or five regional ensembles, with basically minimal knowledge, low mutual contact, and no organization or common rules, since then the information has become more abundant and low-cost, contacts have multiplied, and organization and rules dealing with collective problems are no longer exceptions.

Globalization is not simply the proliferation of free markets, technology, or communications beyond the United States and the West – these are merely vehicles that have accelerated the process. As an evolutionary process, the swelling increase in interaction capacity amplified the scope of connections across ever-larger geographic swaths, facilitating the consistent spread of technology, knowledge, ideology, social systems, and routine interaction. The communications-and-information revolution of the past thirty years has accelerated this globalization, which has had a magnitudinal

* “All historical writing periodizes the past, and makes choices among chronological realities . . . . Traditional history, which is oriented to brief time spans, to the individual, to the event, has long accustomed us to an account that is precipitate, dramatic, and breathless. . . . It has placed beside the narrative (or traditional ‘recitative’) a recitative of the cyclical phase that divides the past into large slices of 10, 20, or 50 years. Well beyond this second recitative lies a history of even more sustained breadth, this time of secular length: the history of long, even very long, duration (longue durée),” which is pervaded by discussions of structures “that become the stable elements of an infinity of generations.” Fernand Braudel, “History and the Social Sciences: The Longue Durée,” trans. Immanuel Wallerstein Review: Fernant Braudel Center 32, no. 2 (2009): 173-174, 178.
effect on interaction capacity across the globe, making the world a much smaller and more integrated network.

As a transformative process, it more critically involves the homogenization of human societies. Throughout history, the diversity of historical and structural foundations of states has fostered a wide array of domestic orders. “Accordingly, emerging powers . . . want to revise [or revolutionize], not consolidate, the international order” to reflect their own preferences and norms. As revolutionary or revisionist forces clamor to exploit power vacuums to drive a wedge through the existing order, an environment ripe for systems, systemic, or interaction change emerges. “Hegemonic war historically has been the basic mechanism of systemic change in world politics. Hegemonic conflict, arising from an increasing disequilibrium . . . leads to the creation of a new international system.” Indeed, the greatest transformations of international order have tended to follow hegemonic clashes, as the conflict shatters existing orders and the victor reconstructs and propagates a new one that reflects its own values and principles.

By harnessing support through external inducement, internal reconstruction, or normative persuasion, the victorious state can legitimize and institutionalize its preferred concept of international system in the aftermath of a system-destroying conflict. “The destruction caused by war and the breakdown of the old order provide opportunities to establish new basic rules and organizing arrangements.” Rather than a series of fits and starts, the globalization of modernity instead has occurred as a

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* Systems change constitutes a change in the very nature or character of the structure. For example, the “rise and decline of the Greek city-state system, and the emergence of the modern European nation-state systems are examples of systems change.” Systemic change involves changes in the distribution of power within the geopolitical order. Interaction change refers to “modifications in the political, economic, and other interactions or processes among the actors in an international system.” Accordingly, revisionist states seek only to revise portions of the global structure, which consists of the international system and the geopolitical order. Revolutionary states seek to overhaul the entire structure and cause a systems change, while status quo states will defend the existing structure. Robert Gilpin, *War & Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 41-43.

† There are three mechanisms through which socialization can occur. External inducement is the use of economic and military incentives to induce smaller states to change their policies and manipulate the preferences of elites through coercion, internal reconstruction is direct intervention in the secondary state to transform its domestic political institutions, and normative persuasion is the reliance on ideological persuasion and transnational learning to secure the compliance of secondary states. G. John Ikenberry and Charles A. Kupchan, “Socialization and Hegemonic Power,” *International Organization* 44, no. 3 (1991): 290-291.
consistent flow, punctuated by periods of hegemonic transformations. The most salient of these transformations have come as national cascades, during which increases in nationalist sentiment drove the global ubiquitization of the nation-state.

**WAR MADE THE STATE . . .**

“Globalization is a process in time . . . , and therefore also it is a historical process in that its understanding requires tracing it back into its past.” While, in prehistorical eras, the distances between sedentary agrarian civilizations and the increase in populations fostered by – and fostering – permanent settlements encouraged the development of social organization along territorial lines, this pristine method of state formation has been documented only a handful of times. Instead, most states developed competitively by conquering and remaking the social order of surrounding tribal areas. States, which are comprised of a complex order of social forces, usually are more powerful, organized, and efficient than less complex surrounding societies, and thus they tend to conquer or absorb them, advancing the civilizational web and globalizing the state.

“Human societies form around four distinct power sources – ideological, economic, military, and political – which . . . congeal around the major macroinstitutions of society.” Ironically, the lack of a central power source in Europe to consolidate social power was a key contributor to the rise of the West. Social power in Europe was

*“Ideological power* derives from the human need to find ultimate meaning in life, to share norms and values, and to participate in aesthetic and ritual practices with others. . . . The power of ideological movements derives from our inability to attain certainty in our knowledge of the world. . . . Ideological power is generally a response to developments in the other three power sources, but it then develops an emergent power of its own. . . . *Economic power* derives from the human need to extract, transform, distribute, and consume the produce of nature. . . . Economic relations are powerful because they combine the intensive mobilization of labor with more extensive networks of exchange. . . . *Military power* . . . is the social organization of concentrated and lethal violence. . . . Military force is focused, physical, furious, and above all lethal. . . . *Political power* is the centralized . . . regulation of social life." It consolidates and orders social forces of the other three power sources. Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power Volume 4: Globalizations, 1945-2011* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1-2. (Bold in original)

† Globalization, of course, is not a uniquely European phenomenon. Indeed, East Asia had a robust state society based on Chinese hegemony and hierarchal harmony, which experienced its own globalization as it ebbed and flowed across its region. Likewise, the Arab Middle East represented a differentiated society wherein the cultivation of local and tribal ancestries enabled the Ottoman Empire to legitimate itself as cosmopolitan, imperial, and patrimonial. Such a conception of the state not as “a direct expression of Islam but a secular institution whose duty it was to uphold Islam” directly facilitated its expansion and legitimacy.
fragmented and diffused among kings, the pope, local religious authorities, nobility, and autonomous fiefdoms. The resulting power competition yielded the political space necessary to cultivate a new form of political community – the state.\(^7\)

Such fragmentation was catalyzed by the collapse of the Carolingian Empire in 888 A.D. The subsequent establishment of the Holy Roman Empire filled the resulting power vacuum and enabled the growth of lord-vassal relationships and the associated rise of nobility.\(^8\) Military and political power was monopolized by the Empire, economic power by lords and trade guilds, and ideological power by the Church. Feudal Europe existed as a series of modules whose population, productivity, and interaction capacities were slowly increasing.\(^9\) Still, the feudal system could not support long-distance trade in bulk, limiting the level of commercial activity and restricting the extent of linkages.\(^10\) While a web harnessing the spectrum of social forces, feudal Europe failed to consolidate them, epitomizing segmentarily differentiated traditional societies wherein social power was pillared and monopolized by a mosaic of singular focal points rather than true functional differentiation. Feudal Europe, thus, did not yet constitute a state society wherein mutual recognition and shared institutions foster a collective normative framework and common interests – indeed states did not yet exist in Europe – but rather a “world-system” in which a series of social entities were linked in varying degrees of economic and political interaction.\(^{11,1}\)

Because it was the European state system that expanded globally to inform the contemporary global structure, however, it is upon this globalization that this chapter will focus. Accordingly, usage of “the West” in this thesis corresponds to those social systems and structures that were developed in Western Europe during the Renaissance and the Enlightenment that subsequently proliferated globally. Rather than a geographic entity, then, “the West” refers to the ecumenical constellation (see page. 33) that embodies this social ecumene. David C. Kang, *East Asia Before the West: Five Centuries of Trade and Tribute* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 17-25; Ira M. Lapidus, “The Golden Age: The Political Concepts of Islam,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 524 (November 1992): 16.

\(^{1}\) Max Weber has classically defined the state as “a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.” Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, eds. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1921] 1946), 78. (Italics in original)

\(^{11,1}\) “Putting in the hyphen [in ‘world-system’] was intended to underline that we are talking not about systems, economies, empires of the (whole) world, but about systems, economies, empires that are a world (but quite possibly, and indeed usually, not encompassing the entire globe). This is a key initial concept to grasp. It says that in ‘world-systems’ we are dealing with a spatial/temporal zone which cuts across many political and cultural units, one that represents an integrated zone of activity and institutions which obey certain systemic rules.” Whereas state
Between 1000-1500, the expansion of agrarian civilization slowed, and the “Old World Web” began to consolidate. Where political, military, and economic social forces of the feudal state were introduced into the relative vacuum of the agricultural countryside, those social orders were disrupted. As new sociopolitical arrangements developed, towns became centers of commerce and expanded trade. The rising class of merchants, artisans, and professionals challenged the authority of monarchy, nobility, and Church. The growth of these commerce centers became loadstones, attracting people seeking autonomy from more traditional lords. As towns urbanized, interaction capacities increased and social mobilization drove the development of a nascent bourgeoisie, propelling Western Europe toward modernity.

While urban centers monopolized military, political, and economic power, the Catholic Church maintained its hold on ideological legitimacy. “Religious ideas were critical to early state formation, since they could effectively legitimate the transition to hierarchy and loss of freedom enjoyed by tribal societies.” The existence of a strong Church to focus ideological power, though, often conflicted with the existence of the Empire to focus military and political power. While the power struggle between the Empire and Church dominated societal interactions, there remained a complex system that not only included the emperor and pope but also city-states, aristocracies, trade guilds, monarchies, and other religious orders. These overlapping sovereignties facilitated feudal anarchy wherein dominance vacillated until the fifteenth century.

By the Council of Constance (1414-1418), a state-based world-system had begun to develop embryonically in Europe. [The Council of Constance] represented . . . the last assertion of the notion of the ultimate sovereignty of . . . Christendom and the first occasion at which the participating clergy were organized by nations. . . . [Its] failure to effect reform of the Church makes revolution inevitable. . . . What is left was an international anarchy of strengthened secular powers, if not a state system in a strict sense.

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Thus, coercive European states began to gain an upper hand on the weakening, ideologically legitimated Church.

As a series of schisms within the Church further loosened its monopoly on ideological power, religious reformers rushed in to fill the void. “The Protestant Reformation destroyed the concept of a world order sustained by the ‘two swords’ of papacy and empire.” This imbalance spawned tension and clashes of faith, fueling wars that necessitated the development of standing armies to protect states’ subjects.

The building of an effective military machine imposed a heavy burden on the population involved: taxes, conscription, requisitions, and more. The very act of building it—when it worked—produced arrangements which could deliver resources to the government for other purposes. . . . It produced the means of enforcing the government’s will over stiff resistance: the army. It tended, indeed, to promote territorial consolidation, centralization, differentiation of the instruments of government and monopolization of the means of coercion . . . . War made the state, and the state made war.32

The wars that “plagued the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were destructive enough to make an imperative of religious tolerance and costly enough to compel European monarchs to bargain away political power [to the growing bourgeoisie] in return for economic resources.”33

In 1648, the Peace of Westphalia institutionalized religious pluralism, and Western Europe solidified into states wherein the prince was free to determine the official religion of his state without interference from outside powers, effectively wresting any vestige of ideological power held by the Church. Moreover, the arrangement institutionalized rules, procedures, and norms that secured each state into an interdependent, rather than simply interconnected, network and enabled the formation of a true state society in Europe.* While the state no longer faced a competitor for control over social power, it had not yet consolidated each source thereof into its apparatus. Rather than harnessing an ideological source that was freed from control of the Church to legitimize order in early Western European states, these states

emphasized the strength of the other sources of social power – coercive institutions – to suppress ideological social forces and enforce their will on their subjects.

[By the end of the seventeenth century,] Western Europe would look very different. Centralizing states had gained strength, with unifying monarchs overcoming resistance from local lords, raising taxes to pay for domestic armies used to contain civil wars and to expel remaining foreigners . . . . Spreading state authority . . . diminished local isolation, raising the possibility of larger-scale identifications.34

With state supremacy affirmed, and borders fixed, the resulting web was optimally fragmented to foster dynamics of security dilemmas, which catalyzed competitive interaction and yielded a spiral to fuel the technological and economic development that drove the age of imperial colonization and the rise of the West.35

THE LONG NINETEENTH CENTURY: AGE OF REVOLUTION36

The modernization of European sociopolitical structures did not end when Europe began colonizing what would become the global periphery, however. While ideological power had been wrested from the Church, the state did not immediately develop an ideological function of its own to replace the Church’s authority. States developed independent from national identity; legitimizing state authority with social cohesion became paramount, and the resulting ideological vacuum was filled by an emerging nationalist zeal.37 Such national projects permeated Europe and the Americas, and 1789 marked the onset of the Age of Revolution.38 The French Revolution began the long 19th Century that was flooded with a potent nationalist sentiment in Europe, which cultivated independence movements throughout the continent.39 Indeed, “nationalism . . . could make the art of government a lot easier. In this respect, it served as religions had long done, reconciling the ruled to their fate.”40 Thus, the state seized control of ideological power, uniting the four sources of social power under a single umbrella – the modern nation-state.*

The nationalist ideology ushered by the French Revolution legitimized political order by deriving the authority to maintain social order from ‘the people’ rather than tautologically from itself. This was the advent of classical liberalism. The national project

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* For a robust discussion on what constitutes a “modern nation-state,” see Chapter 4.
during the European Age of Revolution was an attempt to construct a national identity to correspond with and legitimize the state. In theory, the nation-state – as a modifier to the classical state – conceived ‘the people’ as citizens rather than as subjects, and it provided accountability to those citizens by affording them self-rule. It harnessed together a popular army, economic capitalism, and theoretical self-rule into a cohesive ideology. Thus, nationalism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries filled the ideological void in Europe and fueled a global transformation driven by the Industrial Revolution.41 “By 1800, the rise of the West was far from complete. It would take another century for liberal [accountability], industrial capitalism, and secular nationalism to be consolidated. Nonetheless, the conditions ensuring that the West would eclipse other contenders for primacy were in place.”42

The Napoleonic Wars represented the first thrust of consolidated nationalism into the relative void of dynastic Europe – the globalization of the modern state. While the subsequent Concert of Europe represented a unified front against the spread of nationalist liberalism, this de facto legitimized the ideology by acknowledging its power. “Nationalism would not be dispelled. . . . Britain, France, and the United States were now national states and could not return to being particularistic old regimes. . . . State modernization was unstoppable.”43 During the Age of Revolution, nationalism represented the consolidated institutionalization of “the four greatest modern state crystallizations – capitalism, militarism, representation, and the national issue [all together]. And far from being opposites, classes and nations rose together, structured by all four sources of social power.”44

On June 28, 1914, the long 19th century ended. A Serb nationalist in Sarajevo killed the heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, an incident that was acutely symptomatic of the tensions plaguing Western society. Although fought primarily among countries with empires, World War I was not driven by colonial conflict. Instead, it was sparked when nationalist social forces struck out against a dynastic, multiethnic, transnational empire. Buttressed by the global networks of colonization, increased interactional capacities fostered by technological development, and the resulting imperative for proceduralized global standards of behavior, world trade had
begun to grow exponentially, drawing the global periphery further into a world-system that fed the Western state society.  

“Transaction costs that impede long-distance trade—due to transportation and communications difficulties, government restrictions, or risks to life and property—began to decline precipitously. Capital flows boomed and most of the world’s economies became financially more integrated than ever before.”  

By World War I, the entire West was industrializing, and increased interaction capacities, both nationally and transnationally, had increased human collective powers by magnitudes. Whereas industrialization “generated an intensely connected global market,” the ubiquitization of the nation-state concentrated the sources of social power within sovereign and “caged . . . national territories,” which struggled against the standard set by liberal modernization. As transaction costs declined and industrialized capitalism spurred greater integration, the West came to comprise “simultaneously both a segmental series of nation-state ‘societies’ and a broader transnational civilization. Its [social forces] . . . all oscillated uneasily between the national and transnational.” With no systemic resolution for such tension, chaos ensued. The first war fought on a global scale, World War I shattered the unstable nascent global society. “In retrospect it now seems obvious that the institutional frame of Western society . . . had begun to heave and crack even before 1914. The war of 1914-1918 set great chunks of habit and custom adrift.” Certainly, human error in the form of miscalculations and misperceptions on a massive scale propelled the belligerents – primarily Russia and Germany – toward mobilization and military engagement, but the underlying strains between national aspirations and transnational linkages made war inevitable. 

World War I produced a peace treaty that burdened the already-weakened victors with holding down a revolutionary loser. Aggravating such a burden, diffusion of political force from the centralized state to the masses during the subsequent Great Depression “empowered an active society [that] demanded greater economic protection from the government in the face of extreme adversity. . . . The world economy had outgrown the classical ‘liberal’ economic order, but there was as yet no palatable alternatives on offer.” Germany took advantage of the instability and began to fill the vacuum with its strengthening military power. In this way, World War II was not its
own conflict but rather an extension of World War I, which failed to effectively reconsolidate the social forces that were shattered in its aftermath.

**The Short Twentieth Century: A Great Ideological Gust**

After World War II, the global structure was consumed by the ideologically driven conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. Harnessing the dominance of its social forces, the United States set out to revise the norms of the international system to reflect its own norms, principles, and preferences. The United States favored an ambitious movement away from balance-of-power politics to rely instead on the export of democracy to transform adversaries and threats. Nationalist liberalism was converted into capitalist neoliberalism – and the corresponding international institutions to induce global adherence to the conventions, norms, and regimes thereof.

Despite an irreconcilable disagreement over the constitution of “the people” in a modern nation-state that derives its power from the people, World War II “delivered a mortal blow to the European . . . empire [in the form of a] . . . great gust of ideological power, empowering group after group of nationalists across the empires.” After World War I, the cacophony of great imperial powers scuttled the chance for an international system based on self-determination. But after World War II, only the United States and the Soviet Union counted. And these two superpowers, while fiercely opposed ideologically, were both steeped in anti-colonial roots. The communist bloc, informed by anti-imperial Marxist ideology, actively supported nationalist movements. President Harry Truman, informed by neoliberal ideology, articulated in his doctrine a vow “to help free peoples to maintain their free institutions and their national integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes.”

* Kant postulated that domestic structures and procedures strongly influenced the perceived interests and actual behavior of states in international relations. As a result, he proposed three pillars that would provide a foundation for “perpetual peace” – republican constitutions, a “federation of free states” to enforce a system of international law, and commercial exchange guided through a framework of “cosmopolitan rights.” While classical, nationalist liberalism focused heavily on the influence of representative governments and rule-of-law, neoliberalism sought to institutionalize democratic practice and a free-market economy globally through a set of international organizations. Immanuel Kant, “To Perpetual Peace: A
neoliberal and socialist ideologies that dominated the post–World War II global structure considered independence inevitable, and they were committed to actively assisting nationalist decolonization. The war “delivered a quick coup de grace to the empires”; the state had triumphed over empire.

**AN IR THEORY OF RELATIVITY**

**TRIUMPH AND PERIL: AFTER VICTORY**

By 1991, however, the globalization of modernity had “produced a highly unequal core-periphery” international structure.

Many peripheral societies had broader social connections to a Western metropolis [than to the Soviet Union], of course, through mass immigration . . . . Thus despite Cold War competition, the Western bloc was already overwhelmingly the dominant world centre . . . . The United Nations system as a whole reinforced and was reinforced by Western power. The UN system was largely designed, financed and staffed by Western state elites . . . . Agencies which developed global economic policies, notably the [International Monetary Fund] and World Bank, were clearly Western institutions . . . . With the disappearance of the alternative Soviet bloc, the influence of Western state institutions . . . has been greatly broadened, deepened and generalized . . . . The emergent global state is constituted, therefore, by the complex articulation of the globalized Western state with the global layer of state power. Neither is conceivable without the other.

Though the Cold War was a struggle for dominance in a system perceived as stratified, the post–World War II state system was, in fact, becoming more functionally differentiated. This host of new types of international actors – including intergovernmental, nongovernmental, and multinational organizations; transnational corporations; and nonstate networks – functioned to enforce a neoliberal standard of civilization consisting of economic, political, military, and ideological legitimation norms by which states were expected to abide. As the power configuration associated with modernity – constituting industrialization, the nation-state with functionally differentiated sociopolitical structures, and an expansive neoliberal ideology – proliferated, however, “the gap between core and periphery narrowed,” and the core

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became bigger and less Western. As the core expanded, the distribution of power began to diffuse away from pax-Americana.

While international politics may not be a zero-sum game, the resurgence of alternative powers certainly will alter the tenets of the global structure as it transcends the unipolar moment. While “the United States will long remain the world’s sole superpower,” and “no one country may surpass [it], . . . alliances may put an end to American pre-eminence and its ability to maintain an international order” as potential rivals take advantage of advanced growth rates relative to the United States to attract allies and define their regional systems. The result is a world in which the traditional, trichotomistic polarity model “is too blunt an instrument to track the change from one kind of [order] to another.” While differential growth rates are driving the global order’s eventual transition toward multipolarity, the world is not there yet. Indeed, “unlike past rising powers, China” – the most likely rising power to rival the United States – “is at a much lower technological level than the leading state . . ., and the distance China must travel is extraordinarily large.” “China lags far behind the United States in all three dimensions of power” – economic, military, and soft power, which includes political and ideological influence – “and has focused its policies primarily on its region and on its economic development.” Such sub-global concentration portends a regionalized international system wherein regional powers have significant latitude to determine and construct a system upon which regional relations are governed. Such a decentralized world has been described as a “complex three dimensional chess game” in which the military layer is largely unipolar, the economic layer is multipolar, and power in a third transnational layer is “chaotically dispersed”; “a G-Zero world, one in which no single country or bloc of countries has the political and economic leverage—or the will—to drive [their] agenda”; “no one’s world” in which no one “country, region, or model will dominate,” but in which “numerous power centers as well as multiple versions of modernity” exist; a “hybrid, a uni-multipolar system with one superpower and several major powers [in which] the settlement of key international issues requires action by the single superpower but always with some combination of other major states”; a “multiplex . . . [wherein] leadership is plural and is conducted in different styles and modes . . . Yet
... under one complex ... sharing a common architecture and ... in an interdependent relationship”; and “1 + X,” where there is one super power and any number of great powers that “loom large in their regions but do not register much in a broad spectrum way at the global level.” Whatever the jargon used to describe this ambiguous transition from a clearly unipolar order to a more multipolar one, the key is that power is diffusing away from its concentration around the United States and toward regional centers.

Regionalism as a concept has been key in international affairs since even before states began to interact on a global level. While “old regionalism” implied imperial dominion over a sphere of influence, however, “new regionalism” is metaphorical in nature, discourages hegemonic supremacy, and can be better described as ecumenicalism. Ecumenical constellations are organized not around fixed geographic caging but rather a “dynamic configuration of social and political identities ... [that] not only self-organize their economic, political, and cultural interactions ... but also contribute to global order.” Such constellations largely correspond with the concept of civilization that has been long recognized by IR scholars, even framing for a generation of policy-makers the fundamental tenets of foreign affairs public discourse in the post-Cold War period.

An ecumenical constellation is a pluralist complex of internally differentiated social units with a “shared literary canon, [sustained interaction capacity,] and expectations about human behavior framed by that canon” and interactional consistency. Though not a necessary condition, these constellations tend to be geographically coherent, and they often form the basis of security complexes and state societies. Not simply collections, ecumenical constellations are systems in which cosmopolitan processes over the longue durée reify constructs of identity and its associated ecumene.

While Samuel Huntington may have been astute about the existence of plural civilizations, his characterization of them as coherent, unitary, and primordially opposed actors with the capacity to act as such has poisoned the well of regionalism rather than

* This thesis will use the term ‘ecumenical constellation’, rather than ‘civilization’, because the latter is associated with a ‘standard of civilization’ that implies developed, modern societies are civilized while developing societies are barbaric or backward. Such a connotation is antithetical to the pluralistic nature of the global society that is a central concept in this thesis (see Chapters 4 and 5).
underscoring its importance. To avoid this engrained notion of civilizational clash, the social forces that interact to characterize the contemporary global structure can be conceptualized in a similar way as the gravitational forces that interact to characterize the universal structure in Einstein’s general theory of relativity. In general relativity, mass is diffused among objects that curve spacetime, correspondingly affecting the gravitational physics that governs their interactions with each other. Similarly in international relations relativity, power is diffused among ecumenical constellations that shape the global environment, affecting the behavioral standards governing their interactions. Such interactions occur upon a networked bed of norms strung together by functionally differentiated regimes and weighted by the gravitas of a core normative framework to guide state behavior transnationally and ensure accord across the entire structure.

Figure 2.1. International Relations Theory of Relativity

Through a Huntingtonian prism of civilizational clash, for example, China’s rejection of liberal democracy in favor of an authoritarian, state-managed economy is a threat to Wilsonian neoliberals who hold sacred the universalist ideals of the democratic peace. Rather than competing, however, the ecumenically centered lens of the IR theory

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* The author begs forgiveness for such a grievous oversimplification of Einstein’s general theory of relativity in order to use it as a loadstone from which to adapt and depict a social theory that corresponds only at the most superficial level.
of relativity presents China’s “model of modernity offering a compelling alternative to [some leaders in] the . . . developing world” as complementary. China has placed a premium on economic development, creating a strategic interest for China to develop regionally and globally stable relations. The resulting economic and political in-routes to the broader international system have facilitated steady integration therein.

A CLASH OF NORMS

The rise of multiple loci of power, networked to each other, and the homogenization of social structures into the ubiquitous nation-state have further increased interaction capacities across the globe, and the international system has become even easier to join. The ubiquitization of the nation-state has standardized state systems – ensuring corresponding procedural structures and enabling consistent and routine interaction – and liberalism has equalized the ability of states to interact on a global scale. Simultaneously, industrialization in non-Western states as a result of the communications-and-information revolution “led to dramatic decreases in the cost of processing and transmitting information.” As a result, the channels of contact among societies have multiplied by orders of magnitude. “Barriers to entry into the world ‘information market’ have been dramatically lowered.” Whereas globalization of the past had occurred primarily among large bureaucratic organizations, such as states and multinational corporations, the cheapening of information has opened transnational interaction to looser networks and individuals. Rather than simply increasing the frequency of interaction, the multiplication of these channels of contact has fostered a more “complex interdependence” involving “many relationships that are intensive as well as extensive: long-distance flows that are large and continuous.”

The resulting “networks of interdependence at multicontinental distances [are] linked through flows and influences of capital and goods, information and ideas, people and force, as well as environmentally and biologically relevant substances.” The result is the expansion of the global world-system into a true global society wherein multiple connections and relationships, not simply linkages, among actors span the entire spectrum of social power with minimal consideration of geographic distance.
[The economic dimension of global society] involves long-distance flows of goods, services, and capital, and the information and perceptions that accompany market exchange. . . . [The military dimension] refers to long-distance networks of interdependence in which force, and the threat or promise of force, are employed. . . . [The ideological dimension] involves movement of ideas, information, and images, and of people—who of course carry ideas and information with them. . . . [The political dimension] could refer to that subset of ideological exchange that refers to ideas and information about power and governance . . . or . . . the diffusion of government policies, or of international regimes [and organizations].

In such a global society, the density of networks fosters an increased “institutional velocity—how rapidly a system and the units within it change.” In turn, states within it become vulnerable to changes and interdependent upon each other.

Until the twentieth century, state societies were well suited to a multipolar order. Indeed, the very premise of an order consisting of many loci of powers invites the existence of several state societies, legitimizing each set of norms within each distinct society. In a global society, however, the stabilizing advantages provided by a multipolar order are nonexistent. In the past, the centers of power were confined by geographic distance and a lack of integration, enabling a multitude of diverse ecumenical constellations to coexist in compartmentalized isolation connected by channels linked into the global world-system. In a global society, a universal normative framework to ensure predictable behavioral consistency is vital to enable the enduring and routine interactions that underpin the global economy. In a unipolar global order, wherein the United States provided global public goods and enforced a liberal international system, the “liberal leviathan” provided such a normative framework. As power diffuses, however, the lack of a single unifying power to provide a coherent framework of norms will facilitate massive confusion as revisionist states seek to amend the international system to reflect their own interests, preferences, and values. Absent a standard of behavior, this clash of norms is likely to unleash the forces of fragmentation, akin to a civil war within the global society. Nationalist, ethnic, regional, ideological, economic, cultural, and opportunistic rivalries will emerge as the global society searches for a set of norms, resulting in chaos, violence, and war. Thus, the fundamental question in a global society is how norms will change as power diffuses and, in turn, how this will affect the behavior of states.
THE STABILITY IMPERATIVE

While the state-based world-system initially developed segmentary differentiation to pacify the patchwork of social power holders in Western Europe, the system began to separate into stratified units as it expanded globally. Indeed, the *longue durée* has been characterized by evolutionary interconnectedness on a global scale, catalyzed by “the configuration of modernity, constituted by inter-societal processes, cohered in parts of northwestern Europe during the” Wars of Religion, and connected to the globe during the age of imperial colonization. Thus began the historical momentum of path dependency whereby the “changes in physical and social interaction capacity” drove the necessity of transnational arrangements and fostered functional differentiation in a global society.  

[In such an environment,] the emergence of transnational firms and financial capitalism . . . , the extensive migrations that scattered people around the world . . . , and advances in both technology and transportation meant that the international system reached global scale and therefore became ‘closed’. From then on, only redivision and intensive development were possible.  

“The nation state is passé. Borders have disappeared. Distance is dead. The earth is flat.” While it may be ideologically tempting to pursue a strategy of predominance and universalism wherein U.S. hegemony and global democracy are the strategic goals, power diffusion and rising powers are an inexorable reality. The prospect of rising powers in a global society has led some scholars to portend the end of the nation-state, but globalization does not, in fact, foretell this. “The nation-state and globalization have not been rivals in a zero-sum game with one undermining the other. They rose together in a first phase,” when states usurped ideological power from the vacuum of religious conflict after the Wars of Religion and consolidated the spectrum of social power after the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars. While the resulting “emergence of imperialism and the Atlantic economy created networks of traffic, communication, migration, and commerce, amid the growth of these networks, nation-states and nationalist movements also strengthened.” Though tensions between nationalist and global trends stressed the system to its breaking point in 1914, the resulting vacuum enabled a new system, built upon global regimes and networks, to
emerge from the ashes of imperialism. “Driven by capitalism, nation-states, and American [dominance] . . . the entwining of these three major power organizations has generated globally diffusing ideologies. . . . Globalization is universal but polymorphous;” a diverse society.  

“Today’s international society is experiencing an epoch-making process of transformation beyond its liberal and Western-centric matrix. Three interlocking developments—multipolarity, [ecumenical and] civilizational politics, and multiple modernities—are critical to this transformation.” As such, it is vital to legitimate the multiple versions of modernity as they exist, allow regional powers to regulate their ecumenical system, and encourage integration to the wider international system. Huntington’s prism perceived complex ecumenical constellations, what he called civilizations, through an “illusion of singularity.” Except for under specific conditions, however, these constellations are not unitary actors with the capacity to act coherently as such. Rather, ecumenical constellations “are most similar not in their cultural coherence but in their intercivilizational encounters and transcivilizational engagements. Violent clashes occur for the most part within rather than between” these constellations.  

“In the future, we may, however, be heading toward a clash and potential violence of a different sort. It would implicate Toynbee’s Civilization – spelled with a capital C and in the singular.” Forcing a standardized conception of social power – including homogenous economic systems, political institutions, and ideological frameworks – worldwide would invite the same tensions between nationalist and global social forces that led to the 1914 collapse.

The Huntingtonian vision of a multicivilizational-multipolar order moves from the recognition of the growing multicultural nature of international society but . . . his proposal is based on the opposite logic of the dialogical policies of multiculturalism that needs to be strengthened. In Huntington’s view, the multicultural nature of the world has, on the one hand, to be almost confined, internationally, within a civilizational cage, following the ‘good-fences-make-
good-neighbors’ principle and, on the other, has to be constrained, domestically, though strict immigration policy . . . His argument is not about building intercivilizational bridges of mutual understanding but, rather, about building walls of containment and separation, something that, in the long term, would inevitably reinforce the antagonistic logics of multipolarity along civilizational/great power lines.95

As such, “the Huntingtonian construction of a multicivilizational-multipolar system . . . leaves us with a worrying system of forces, of civilizational macroregional great/rising powers, ready for collision; paradoxically, a scenario not too dissimilar from the clash of civilizations.”96

As the dominant power upon whose values, principles, and preferences the existing international system is based, it is the responsibility of – and in the interests of – the United States to safeguard the viability of and stability of that system. Moreover, as other states and ecumenical centers are expected to abide by the normative framework thereof, the United States has a moral obligation to ensure its ability to accommodate the development of those powers. Tensions exist as rising powers are “chasing a moving target and in danger of becoming alienated again as post-modern developments at the global level such as human rights and ‘good governance’ created a new ‘standard of civilization’.”97 The very nature of the existing international system as open and rules based, though, provides tremendous opportunity to accommodate alternative models and facilitate its integration; it is exceedingly difficult to overturn but easy to join.98

Indeed institutions are sticky, and the nature of the existing system is the greatest strategic asset to the United States, as it welcomes full participation from both established great powers and developing states. In such a way, the global structure, underpinned by consistent behavioral norms, can safeguard routine interactions and build ties among ecumenical centers, ensuring the system remains steeped in accord rather than clash.
CHAPTER 3

THE TRAGEDY OF A CRUSADING DEMOCRACY

THE WILSONIAN MOMENT

Throughout much of the American experience, policy elites have held sacred the democratic peace as the key stabilizing mechanism in the global structure, and the pursuit of a post-World War I international system was America's first attempt at its white whale. President Woodrow Wilson's revolutionary conception of a new world order abandoned entirely the power politics of the Old World in favor of liberal internationalism – collective security, armament reductions, and free trade – and self-determination. Wilson insisted that “governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed,” suggesting that the international legitimacy of states would rest not only on the ability to exercise sovereignty over territory in a classic Weberian sense but also on the nature of its governance. Thus, President Wilson attempted to accelerate the “worldwide trend away from rule by fiat and toward government by consent that would . . . undergird the preservation of international peace.” While Wilson demonstrated ambivalence toward the application of self-determination to nations outside Europe, colonial nationalists received Wilson's rhetoric not through the lens intended but rather through a prism that focused the context on their own goals. Thus, nationalism became internationalized.

Unfortunately for the colonial world, the existing realities of imperial powers were stubborn, and they collided with advocacy for self-determination; the principle was removed from the institutionalized peace conventions entirely in favor of the mandate system whereby, in theory, metropolitan Western powers would govern their mandates to prepare them for independence. The reality, of course, was the perpetuation of the imperial world-system wherein the colonial world was divided not to nurture coherent nation-states but to maximize resource and economic extraction from the mandates to the metropole. By the Spring of 1919, it was clear that the fate of the colonial world was not a central issue for the great powers, and crises ensued in the colonial world and
throughout much of post-colonial Europe as national uprisings erupted in the wake of fallen multiethnic empires. The European crisis only had the effect of educing Germany to sign a severely retributive treaty, however, and without support from the West, colonial nationalist ideology had insufficient capacity to overcome the forces of imperial or authoritarian rule. Thus, “the fragmented political landscape and ambitions for autarky prevented the full resumption of the globalizing economy of the pre-1914 era. What remained soon collapsed” as the failure of the Treaty of Versailles to reconsolidate a global order precipitated World War II.9

Whereas conflicts and hegemonic transitions of the past had interrupted social orders and routines, the drawn-out and iterative process of the Cold War, which followed on the heels of destruction, facilitated the establishment of routines.10 Among these routines was an overarching foreign policy underpinned by the ideal of a democratic peace. During the four decades that constituted the Cold War, processes were developed to respond to a threat-based strategic environment; that is an environment wherein there is one primary adversary that represents a single, known, and predictable threat, which provides strategic focus and reduces the risk of misperception.11

Despite shifts in emphases and nuances, the containment of communism unified U.S. administrations for over forty years. George Kennan's original concept of containment harnessed all four sources of social power. Politically, containment held that the Soviet Union was a revolutionary state. As such, it was unstable – it would either collapse or become status quo over time. Kennan’s other three pillars, however, were perverted by NSC-68, the official Cold War containment strategy issued by the U.S. National Security Council in 1950 that was influenced not only by Kennan's conception of containment but also by those advocating for détente, as well as for a rollback of the communist threat. The particularist nature of Kennan’s concept gave way to universalism – instead of accepting certain national communist movements, such as

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*Emerging from the ashes of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires, armed conflicts engulfed much of Central and East Europe. Likewise, nationalist uprisings broke out in Korea, Egypt, and India.*
Titoism or Maoism, based on the norms and culture of a society, any communist movement in any form was to be opposed. Thus, neoliberal ideology was used to oppose a robust communist ideology rather than to fill a void where weaker social forces existed. This produced a zero-sum dynamic where any success of the USSR or advance of communism would constitute a corresponding loss for the U.S. In turn, Kennan’s plan for a strong-point defense – whereby the United States could cherry pick only certain threats to counter, affording a degree of unpredictability – shifted to perimeter defense, forcing a military reaction to every advance of communism; military power would indiscriminately buttress ideological power. Finally, Kennan’s imperative for asymmetric employment of U.S. strengths – primarily economic and technological – was redefined militarily, promoting expansion of the nuclear arsenal to meet any threat with overwhelming military strength while other forms of response atrophied. Thus, the Cold War containment strategy, designed originally to harness all four sources of social power, was redefined to disproportionately rely on military power to reinforce the vitality of democracy worldwide – the second pursuit of the white whale.12

OLD HABITS DIE HARD

In 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed, and American foreign policy lost its unifying factor. The result was a unipolar world in which the U.S. had a preponderance of power but no coherent conception of how to effectively wield it. Still, old habits die hard. “Spreading democracy has long been a key component of American grand strategy,” and after forty years of containment, “the proposition that democracies seldom if ever go to war against one another has nearly become a truism.”13

This endurance of strategic thought perpetuated during the Cold War resulted in the continuity of conviction among Washington policy elites that U.S. national interest is predicated on the advancement of global democracy. Again, this nebulous white whale – visible this time through the prism of “crusading moralism” – propelled democratization to become the “third pillar” of President Bill Clinton’s foreign policy.14 More recently, the neoconservative movement that guided George W. Bush’s administration fused to this paradigm the aggressive “don’t tread on me” attitude of
Jacksonian foreign policy. While such a strategy may have made sense in the ideologically driven environment of the Cold War, the strategic environment has changed enormously since 1991.

The fall of the Soviet Union facilitated a shift to the perception of an uncertainty-based strategic environment, one in which salient threats are dynamic, multiple, and unpredictable. Whether this marked an actual fundamental transformation in global patterns of conflict and instability or a popularized misconception fueled by heightened sensitivity to incidental events, perception is reality in international affairs, and the sudden withdraw of one superpower from the bipolar strategic environment caused a diffusion of Washington policymakers’ attention. No longer concerned with a primary adversary in a dyadic relationship, the United States now attuned itself to a host of more peripheral, less predictable actors in a complex interactional web that had been considered trivial during the Cold War. In essence, the focus of U.S. national security policy shifted from deterring an existential threat to deterring individual threats against U.S. citizens and interests anywhere in the world, requiring both a wider aperture and sharper depth of field.

* There have been four marco traditions in American foreign policy. The early American republic was divided between the liberal ideals of Thomas Jefferson and realist conceptions of Alexander Hamilton. (1) Hamiltonians focused on commercial realism and economic power, but these ideas were largely rejected as a basis for American foreign policy due to their resemblance to the European system of realpolitik that the new republic was attempting to escape. Thus, the (2) Jeffersonian vision of America as a “beacon of liberty” – an example of democracy for all other societies to emulate – became the foundation of American foreign policy until the mid-eighteenth century. (3) Jacksonians came to represent the populist hawks who value individualism and prefer to protect the liberties of Americans. Like Jeffersonians, they are suspicious of foreign intrusions, but whereas Jeffersonians hold the First Amendment of the Constitution in highest regard, Jacksonians revere the Second Amendment, and should they perceive a threat thereof, they are quick to respond with ruthless military force. (4) Wilsonians emerged as a prominent school of thought after WWI. They represent a view of global liberal values derived from the “democratic peace” theory. Not content with perfecting democracy at home, Wilsonians seek to spread liberal values throughout the world. These four traditions continue to inform U.S. foreign policy. For example, the George H.W. Bush Administration steered a largely Hamiltonian course, while the Clinton Administration was a Hamiltonian-Wilsonian mix. George W. Bush’s neoconservative movement can be considered an uneasy coalition of Wilsonian and Jacksonian influence, the Tea Party represents Jacksonian thinking, and the Obama Administration has demonstrated an uneasy tension between Jeffersonian ideals with a Wilsonian streak. Walter Russell Mead, Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and how it Changed the World (New York: Routledge, 2002).
“In contrast with previous post-war junctures, the close of the Cold War was followed by continuity rather than change.”

Indeed, “habit drives much of human behavior.” Instead of addressing the underlying social drivers of uncertainty and instability, U.S. foreign policy continued to operate under the basic premises of containment, and disproportionate military force has increasingly been used to democratize unstable regions. The democratic peace had taken the next logical step – not only would the United States encourage liberalization and transitions from empire or authoritarianism, but the U.S. would actively use military force to catalyze forced-pace democratization to contain an unknown threat. Flooded with neoconservative zeal, the U.S. focused its social forces on expanding the democratic umbrella worldwide.

**The White Whale**

“Interventions designed to remake societies decidedly unripe for democracy,” however, can – and did – facilitate unintended and unpredictable destabilizing effects that reverberate throughout regions. “By early 2011, two successful, nonviolent ‘Arab Spring’ uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt had lifted the veil of fear in Libya. Accordingly, in mid-February 2011, the Libyan people rose up in analogous, nationwide protests against their dictator, Muammar Qaddafi.” The situation quickly escalated and by March, to enforce the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine that eerily echoed President Wilson’s conception of state legitimacy, the United Nations Security Council had authorized a no-fly zone and all necessary means except occupation troops to protect Libya’s civilians. The subsequent NATO airstrikes gradually enabled rebels to turn the tide of the conflict and overthrow Qaddafi.

While Libya’s subsequent democratic election in July 2012 brought to power a moderate and secular coalition government, that government has since collapsed. In its wake is a factionalized mosaic of political coalitions and ad-hoc governing bodies that are

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*R2P is “the idea that sovereign states have a responsibility to protect their own citizens from avoidable catastrophe—from mass murder and rape, from starvation—but that when they are unwilling or unable to do so, that responsibility must be borne by the broader community of states.” International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect* (Ottowa: International Development Research Centre, 2001), VIII.*
competing for political legitimacy. By April 2012, human security in Libya had degraded to lawlessness, which “amount[ed] to crimes against humanity” – abuses that had, ironically, not occurred under Qaddafi’s rule. Moreover, the dozens of militias that proliferated during the revolution have failed to disarm, demobilize, or reintegrate into society. “In many cases, the militias hold considerably more sway – and arms – than the police force.” This failure has transformed Libya into a stronghold for radical Islamists, highlighted by the September 2012 attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, and resulted in sectarian and religious violence, catalyzing the multisided and complex Libyan Civil War that began in 2014.

Such a civil war is problematic because it is immune to the recognized modes of conflict resolution. Democratic transitions are the function of a willingness to compromise among political elites in the ruling regime and the opposition. Prolonged political crisis evolves into an iterated prisoner’s dilemma wherein the standoff between regime and opposition generates an untenable situation for both sides – a mutually hurting stalemate. This produces the conditions for a democratic opening as negotiation becomes preferable to continued crisis. Such a solution, however, presupposes a two-by-two player game within which moderates in both the ruling party and the opposition negotiate with each other, each using the more unacceptable and drastic goals of party hardliners and radical opposition members as leverage. The dynamics in a more complex multisided conflict, however, are not conducive to such a pacted settlement, as the web of shifting and amorphous alliances removes bargaining leverage and the temptation to free-ride on ceasefires incentivizes radical groups to increase violence during negotiations.

*“At the moment, Libya has three centers of power... The Government of National Accord (GNA),” based in Tripoli, is an interim government formed under the terms of the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) signed in 2015 and unanimously endorsed by the UN Security Council. The House of Representatives (HOR) in Tobruk is the legitimate legislative authority under the LPA. It assumed this status in 2014 after it was elected to replace the first democratically elected Libyan government, although the election turnout was only 18%. The General National Congress (GNC), based in Tripoli, is the governing body that was formed by ousted members of the originally elected 2012 parliament. Mary Fitzgerald and Mattia Toaldo, Mapping Libya’s Factions, Draft (Berlin: European Council on Foreign Relations, 2016), 1-3.
The effects on neighboring states and the wider region after the Libyan intervention also have been discouraging. Mali, previously considered to be a beacon of peace and democracy in the region, provides a striking example. After Qaddadi’s defeat, ethnic Tuareg fighters in his security forces fled to Mali, bringing with them weapons and military training. They launched a rebellion in northern Mali, which was hijacked by Islamist forces. This spurred a massive displacement of Malian civilians, which amounted to a humanitarian emergency. Though French troops had intervened and dislodged the Islamists from the main cities in northern Mali by early February 2013, the long-term prognosis remains problematic. In a tragic example of unintended consequences, NATO intervention in Libya had essentially traded the Malian beacon of democracy for an intractable civil war in Libya and triggered a chain reaction of military interventions.

Democratization is not always a failure; indeed, Germany and Japan are two oft-cited success stories of the strategy. Unfortunately, however, these cases may prove to be the exceptions rather than the rule. Since the twentieth century, there have been twenty-nine Foreign Imposed Regime Changes (FIRCs) carried out by the United States. Of those twenty-nine, only three nations experienced successful democratization within the following ten years: Japan (1949), Germany (1955), and Panama (1990). In two further cases, the U.S. restored democracy to France (1946) and Haiti (1994); however France was a functioning democracy before the Nazi invasion, and Haiti could never really be considered a well-functioning state prior to or following democratization, and it later reverted back to autocracy. These limited success stories seem to present a blueprint suggesting that a significant degree of political order, civil society, and community organization is a necessary prerequisite to successful democratization. “It is therefore

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unlikely that nation building can be achieved by outside actors . . . [Forced-pace democratization] undermines, rather than strengthens, the legitimacy of the state they are supposed to help build” by encouraging the perception that state institutions are too weak to function without foreign aid. The result are regions beset by instability and ecumenical constellations left with a perception of the United States as a dangerous, destabilizing force to be balanced against. The democratic peace is a white whale – thus is the tragedy of a crusading democracy.

**THE NEW, NEW, NEW THING**

Whereas decolonization had been the dominant trend in the international system after World War II, authoritarian transition became a primary focus of post-Cold War global order. In this context, the neoconservative ideology has driven a militarized U.S. foreign policy of global homogenization – the liberal nation-state would become the ubiquitous legitimate form of human political community in the global society.

It is true, “after the mid-1980s, armed global conflict declined by sixty percent until 2011.” Coincident with democracy’s third wave, stability was the norm despite quantitative forecasting models predicting instability that did not immediately manifest. The implication was that (1) the tenets of the international system had fundamentally changed and the democratic peace had been realized, or (2) a wave of instability was overdue and an outbreak of crises was imminent. Now, this wave of instability seems to have begun, the post-Cold War peace dividend appears to be largely spent, and the consequences of a threat-based posture in an uncertainty-based strategic environment – real or perceived – have become apparent. The deficit of such a

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† “A wave of democratization is a group of transitions from nondemocratic to democratic regimes that occur within a specified period of time and that significantly outnumber transitions in the opposite direction during that period.” The first wave was sparked by the American and French Revolutions and occurred from 1828-1926. The second wave began in World War II and lasted from 1943-1962. The third wave began “following the end of the Portuguese dictatorship in 1974.” Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 15-21.
discontinuity is most evident in the American inability to respond effectively to the regional and intrastate wars that have permeated through regions consisting of post-colonial fragile states since the advent of the Arab Spring in January 2011.

Against a backdrop of complex transnational interactions, the distinction between domestic and international sectors, between interstate and intrastate conflict, between aggression and repression, and between local and global has blurred.\textsuperscript{31} In such an environment, “regional effects loom large and the negative influences, or ‘diffusion of insecurity’, from neighboring states turn tensions into a deeper and more volatile form of insecurity.”\textsuperscript{32} Such insecurity shares its political nature with more traditional wars, but here the continuity ends.

New Wars involve a blurring of the distinctions between war (usually defined as violence between states or organized political groups for political motives), organized crime (violence undertaken by privately organized groups for private purposes, usually financial gain), and large-scale violations of human rights (violence undertaken by states or politically organized groups against individuals).\textsuperscript{33}

The result of such instability in regions cross-cut with myriad identities fragmented across and aggregated within state borders is a complex environment wherein acute instability occurs almost continuously and often diffuses rapidly across borders.

Conflict is pervasive as regional states intercede on behalf of a kindred identity caught in conflict, violence diffuses as social identity groups span state borders, copy-cat revolutions cascade successively as social forces perceive situational similarities to revolutions occurring elsewhere, transnational threats such as terrorist groups disregard state boundaries, resource scarcity encourages a scramble for access, alliances and regional power structures cause sequential involvements, global and regional powers intervene to protect perceived national interests, and displaced social groups seek viable

\footnote{Instability can be latent or acute. Instability is latent in an unstable, volatile, or fragile environment wherein tensions and the potential for instability to become acute exist but has not yet become manifest. Acute instability occurs when social forces have mobilized and instability has become symptomatic, resulting in violent conflict, a salient risk of irregular regime change or threat to territorial integrity, or pathological homogenization, which can be observed in extreme forms of ethnic cleansing like institutional coercion, policed repression, callous policies, and premeditated mass killing. Heather Rae, \textit{State Identities and the Homogenization of Peoples} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 14-55; Michael Mann, \textit{The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 12.}
escape routes and settlements elsewhere in the region and in neighboring regions. In today’s interdependent world facilitated by the communications-and-information revolution, “the complexities and densities of interactions, interconnection, and networks among the myriad actors” foster a development-security-governance-stability nexus wherein “any change in one direction will have consequences for each of the other dimensions.”34 The result of crusading democratization in such a dynamic environment has been an increase in volatility, conflict, and violence “concentrating in the center: the Arab Middle East and Africa” – the new, new, new thing.35
CHAPTER 4
THE PARADOX OF MODERNIZATION

THE ESCAPE TO MODERNITY

The Weberian state is dead. The new, new, new thing has demonstrated that Max Weber’s classic definition of a state as “a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of legitimate use of physical force within a given territory” has become a bromide. While convenient, this conception fails to capture the nuance necessary to convey the complexity of social forces that act upon communities. Modern states channel these social forces not only through legitimate force but also through economic networks; behavioral norms; cultural values, principles, and beliefs; and political systems. Interaction among these myriad social forces generates an imperative for the political community to mediate social relations in such a way that aggregates preferences from society, articulates and channels them through functional political institutions, and reflects and distributes the resulting goods and services back to society. Indeed, “political institutions . . . emerged out of the interaction among and disagreement among social forces, and the gradual development of procedures and organizational devices for resolving those disagreements.” The resulting functionally differentiated institutional structures interact to manifest societies that “are constituted of multiple overlapping and intersecting sociospatial networks of power” that are funneled through a central ordering system. Thus necessarily engaged in more than simply coercive enforcement, a modern state is the centrally administered and internationally recognized set of institutions within a given territory that is concerned with the maintenance of order among social forces across the spectrum of social power.

The artificial separation of these social spheres into functionally differentiated institutions linked together by a coherent sociopolitical system is the central feature of modernity. Thus, modernization involves development along multiple, intersecting sectors. Economic modernization involves the transformation from an agrarian to an industrial community. Modernization theory predicts that industrialization fosters a host of social transformations – including urbanization, which increases interaction
capacity and facilitates a universal language to enable the development of a robust civil society; increased education opportunities as a middle class develops; and finally economic expansion—that are mutually reinforcing and result in an acute awareness of inequities. With industrialization expanding the capacity for collective action, such inequities galvanize social mobilization and catalyze functional differentiation as the state is forced to develop specialized institutions to channel and reflect these newly politically salient social forces. Such functionally differentiated institutions enable political modernity, which manifests a liberal political society constituting an indivisible trinity: (1) legitimacy—the state conceived as a reflection of “the people,” from whom governing authority is derived, as citizens rather than subjects; (2) accountability—procedures that empower “the people as a sovereign entity” to enforce their preferences; and (3) functional differentiation—political institutions designed to uphold the rule of law and appropriately channel social forces in such a way that all citizens hold equal rights. As previously disparate people are consolidated under such a central umbrella, however, a salient conception of a unified people requires ideological modernization. While the ideological sphere does not necessarily require shedding them entirely, it involves the transcendence of traditional social identity groups—including those based on kinship, religion, tribe, sect, region, ethnicity, or race—and the development of a national identity and corresponding ecumene. “Every modern state formally defines its citizenry,” which is internally inclusive but externally exclusive. “There is a conceptually clear, legally consequential, and ideologically charged distinction between citizens and foreigners. The [modern] state claims to be the state of, and for, a particular, bounded citizenry . . . . This bounded citizenry is usually conceived as a nation—as something more cohesive than a mere aggregate of persons who happen to legally belong to the same state.”

As opposed to a state, a nation is not constrained by territorial borders but is instead an “imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.” When such a community is reified to overlap with the territorial borders of

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* A nation is imagined in that the individuals constituting the nation fabricate an image of communion and community—a national identity is constructed around a defined set of perceived
a state, the result is a nation-state. A nation-state exists where “the boundaries of the state’s territories and those of a homogenous . . . community that shares a national identity are coextensive.” Nation-states are organized around the “like over like” principle that “each people should be self-rulled” – “like should rule over likes.” Popular sovereignty and self-determination are derived from the ideal that each nation deserves its own state and that the state and its corresponding nation should overlap nationalism. Nationalism, at its core, is the ideology of political self-rule.

A state that corresponds with a nation is fundamentally intended to reflect that nation; thus a nation-state is inherently modern to some degree. However to the extent that a nation-state fails to develop differentiated institutions, procedures for accountability, or economic industrialization it may not represent a fully consolidated modern state. Conversely, as “citizenship is a universal and distinctive feature of the modern political landscape,” whereby the citizenry – or “the people” – is formally defined and foreigners are excluded entry to or full participation in the political community, fully consolidated modern states are inherently nation-states.

**The Agony of Modernization**

Modern states harness social forces from across the entire spectrum of social power. Hence, a precarious balance whereby state political institutions must be strong enough to reflect and channel these social forces to equitably provide public goods without consolidating them into a despotic patrimonial regime that controls or manipulates public goods and resources for the benefit of a favored clientele, generating revolutionary social forces intent on overturning the system or capturing its institutions for the benefit of a subjugated social identity group. Conceived as such, stability is highly concomitant with the state.

markers and affinities. A nation is _limited_ because there are finite, though elastic, borders beyond which lie other nations. A nation is _sovregn_ because it is endowed with political salience and a mandate to govern on behalf of those belonging to it. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (New York: Verso, [1983] 2006). 49-50. (Italics in original)
Traditional modernization theory holds that the host of social transformations that occur as a society modernizes – industrialization, urbanization, education, and economic expansion – are mutually reinforcing by fostering social mobilization and functional differentiation. When these pillars develop too rapidly or at different rates, however, shocks and gaps appear that instead generate a breakdown of legitimacy in modernizing societies as they are incapable of effectively reflecting or channeling the preferences of a mobilized political community.19 Institutionalist theories suggest that the complexity of social forces unleashed by modernization must be managed by robust and inclusive state institutions that build state capacity before restraining those institutions with rule of law and procedures for accountability.20 Thus, political modernization – liberalization – is a process by which legitimacy and differentiation should precede accountability. Indeed, highly centralized states can aggregate and articulate interests in such a way that more liberal governance systems cannot, enabling the nation-state to speak with a single voice.

A weak state apparatus will lose the capacity to effectively maintain the boundaries between its institutional functions, tempting particularistic social forces to capture and subordinate state institutions and delegitimizing the system as its procedures for accountability decay.21 The result, as captured institutions exclusively reflect the preferences of a favored social identity group, is the politicization and pillaring of ascriptive identities, which drives conflict.22† The boundaries of identity

* Robust institutions are adaptable, complex, autonomous, and coherent. An institution’s adaptability is a function of environmental challenge and age. As an organization faces and successfully adapts to challenges, its likelihood of surviving further challenges increases. Likewise, as an organization survives chronologically, generationally, and functionally, it is more likely to survive into the future. An institution’s complexity involves the proliferation of subunits, as well as the functional differentiation of those subunits. Institutional autonomy refers to the extent to which political organizations are independent from and immune to the preferences of particular social forces. Finally, coherence requires a consensus on the boundaries between organizational functions and the procedures by which disputes are resolved. Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 12-22.

† Pillared identities are politically salient social identity groups that have formed around fixed-identity markers. These are what Clifford Geertz referred to as “the assumed given” – those features that determine attachments and communal bonds that are formed ipso facto and are not easily changed, such as religion, region, primary language, custom, assumed blood ties, race, tribe, ethnicity, kinship, physical attributes, etc. Thus, while “the markers that distinguish the in-group vary from case to case and time to time,” the mechanism that drives, for example, ethnic conflict, is the same mechanism that drives religious extremism, sectarian conflict, etc. Clifford Geertz, “The Integrative Revolution,” in The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays, ed. Clifford
become of primary importance when citizenship becomes synonymous with a pillared social identity; those belonging to the in-group retain the benefits of the nation-state while those in the out-group become subjugated and repressed. The state will build its infrastructure to provide public goods and channel the benefits of modernization to reinforce clientele and patronage relationships or along routinized networks that include geographically concentrated in-groups and exclude geographically isolated outgroups. Indeed, the formation of a nation-state is inherently an exclusionary process as a state formed around a defined identity by default defines and excludes outgroups. In plural societies wherein politically salient pillared identity groups preclude the development of a political community or civil society consisting of overlapping affiliations and crosscutting cleavages, the state will exercise its coercive institutions to reify the nation-state around a favored identity. Thus, outgroups are sorted out, oftentimes resulting in a crisis of legitimacy as minority groups lose stake in the state and act to revise the system and humanitarian emergencies as the ruling regimes attempts to repress the popular uprising. Such conflicts often diffuse geographically to proximate states where there are cross-border affinities or continuities among identity groups in conflict, driving irredentism in neighboring nation-states seeking to consolidate its own national identity.

* Pillared identities are existential in that membership in them is exclusive and determinant. “When individuals belong to a number of different organized or unorganized groups with diverse interests and outlooks, their attitudes will tend to be moderate as a result of . . . psychological cross-pressures.” Consequently, other social identity groups lose their fearsome reputation, and political factions become parties, based on fluid-identity markers such as class or ideology whereby individuals can freely move from one to another. Thus, the majority becomes synonymous with the state apparatus while the minority works to expand its representation to become the majority in the future; both majority and minority retain stake in the state. “Conversely, when a society is riven with sharp cleavages and when memberships and loyalties do not overlap but are concentrated exclusively within each separate segment of society, the cross-pressures that are vital to political moderation and stability will be absent,” the minority will remain so in perpetuity, lose stake in the state, and transform into movements to overthrow, destroy, or amend it. Arend Lijphart, Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 10; Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, new ed. (Orlando: Harcourt, [1968] 1976), 257.

† “Interstate violence has followed when a nation has a state of its own but seeks to redeem territory occupied by fellow nationals living in a neighboring state. This mechanism took on the name of irredenta (“unredeemed” in Italian) when after the uniting of modern Italy, its nationalists sought to incorporate the Austrian possessions of Trentino, Trieste, Dalmatia, Istria,
In complex ethnic landscapes, warfare and assimilation remain the only practical modes for the political integration of “essentially ‘non-assimilable’ groups.”

New states carved out in the name of ethnic nations that in reality encompass sizable ethnic minorities can address the contradiction between their claims to ethnonationalism and the existence of ethnic minorities in three ways: They can continue balancing the ethnic demands and interests, they can assimilate ethnic minorities into the dominant ethnonation, or they can try to wipe out the ethnic minorities.

“The process of ‘making the state and the nation commensurate’ took a variety of forms,” but such homogenization often is most easily expressed in the form of ethnic cleansing, which occurs when the members of one social identity group remove members of another from a locality. Localities can be cleansed if a culture disappears, regardless of any actual physical removal or killing of persons. Figure 4.1 charts the continuum of ethnic cleansing, from voluntary assimilation to genocide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPES OF VIOLENCE</th>
<th>EXTENT OF CLEANSING</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>None</strong></td>
<td>1) Multiculturalism</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Coercion</strong></td>
<td>1) Official language restrictions</td>
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<td><strong>Policing Repression</strong></td>
<td>Selective policing repression</td>
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<td><strong>Violent Repression</strong></td>
<td>Generalized policing repression</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unpremeditated Mass Deaths</strong></td>
<td>Mistaken war, civil war/revolutionary projects, fratricide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Premeditated Mass Killing</strong></td>
<td>Exemplary repression, systematic reprisals</td>
</tr>
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Figure 4.1. Continuum of Ethnic Cleansing


*Multiculturalism* occurs when a state simply ignores ethnicity. In many cases, however, ethnic groups dominate distinct territories, facilitating a desire to create separate states or regional autonomies. In these potentially dangerous situations, multicultural ideals have difficulty remaining ethnically blind. In such cases, rather than ignoring ethnicity, ethnicity is often built into constitutions through *confederalism* — in which ethnicities are granted a degree of political control — or *consociationalism* — wherein ethnicities are guaranteed power sharing in the central government. When there is no violence, but ethnic groups weaken or disappear, there is cleansing
But “the creation of a peaceful regional order of nation-states has usually been the product of a violent process of ethnic separation,” or pathological homogenization, represented by the shaded blocks in Figure 4.1. Pathological homogenization generates a cascading series of nationalist conflicts and wars that ultimately result in the realization of a set of ideal nation-states wherein state, citizens, and national identities coincide—a national cascade.

The systemic consequences have been protracted conflict, pervasive insecurity, retrogressive disintegration, under-utilization of resources, over-consumption, and ‘arrested development’ . . . . ‘Successful’ transitions to [nationalist] forms have almost invariably fallen back on the assimilationist model of state-building as multi-ethnic states disintegrate and disaggregate along [fixed] identity fissures, by consent. In its extreme, voluntary assimilation produces a cleansed society, not from hostile acts by the dominant group, but by positive inducements. The first escalation of violence is in the form of institutional coercion. Discrimination is the most common policy and limits the rights of the out-group while permitting its members to retain their ethnic identities. Segregation is geographical partial cleansing wherein the out-group is ghettoized in apartheid or enslaved conditions. Cultural suppression involves total cleansing through only institutional coercion wherein public institutions suppress the culture of the out-group, whose identity is thus forcibly assimilated into the dominant group. This form of ethnic cleansing is usually legal, involving little physical force. Physical violence begins with selective policed repression; selective meaning it is targeted at dissidents and policed meaning the orderly enforcement of laws through routine and legitimate means. Policed total cultural repression, population exchanges, and policed deportation and emigrations include a wide variety of state-run cleansings; coercive, but not usually very violent. Serious physical violence is introduced with general policed repression aimed at groups harboring dissidents, whereby sanguinary official punishment is inflicted in order to coerce the main part of the group to submit. Pogroms, settlement/displacement, and communal riots represent various short-lived forms of violence that result in partial cleansing. Wild deportation involves enough brutality to persuade members of the out-group to flee. Biological policies deny the out-group reproduction. Mass deaths can oftentimes occur as an unintended consequence of the dominant group’s policies. Policy mistakes such as submitting ethnic groups to labor conditions for which they are ill-adapted, or revolutionaries seeking to achieve major social transformations through foolish policies, are usually abandoned after the consequence has become clear. Callous policies, while not directly intended to cleanse the out-group, may result in partial or total cleansing because the dominant group’s negative views of the out-group prevent it from caring about the effects of the policy. In its worst case, callous policies can result in ethnocide, the unintended destruction of a group and its culture. Finally, premeditated mass killing of civilians is usually framed as exemplary repression, that is the brutal and public destruction of a locality or group as an example to coerce similar groups into acceptance of a policy. “Forced conversion offers a stark choice: ‘convert or die.’” In these cases, most members of the out-group “live, cleansed partially—of their religion but not their entire culture.” Politicide refers to killing where the intended target is the entire leadership and potential leadership class of an out-group. While politicide and exemplary repression may overlap, destroying “leaders and intellectuals is intended to undermine the out-group’s cultural identity, whereas cities cowed into submission through exemplary repression may retain their identities.” Similarly, classicide represents the intended mass killing of entire social classes. Whereas ethnocide is a mostly right-wing phenomenon, classicide seems to be a primarily leftist form of cleansing. Finally, genocide is the “criminal act intended to destroy an ethnic, national, or religious group, which is targeted for destruction as such.” Genocide is intentional, aiming to destroy an entire group, not only physically but also culturally. Michael Mann, The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 13-17. (Italics in original).
often stimulating severe disruptions and dislocations as groups reaggregate in 'natural' territories and ethnic enclaves.  

“Much of the history of . . . Europe, in fact, has been a painful, drawn-out process of ethnic disaggregation.”

THE GREAT SORTING OUT

WARS OF RELIGION: THE FIRST NATIONAL CASCADE

Conventional scholarship holds that nationalism emerged in the mid- to late-eighteenth centuries in France and America as industrialization, capitalism, and print technology converged to foster urbanization and an educated middle class, enabling social mobilization galvanized by demands for popular sovereignty. Alternatively, most national narratives hold that their nation is an ancient one that can be traced by symbols, conflict, and shared histories through time immemorial – some scholars agree. Indeed nations, “imagined communities” with politically salient rights, certainly existed in the Roman Republic (and the various victims of Roman imperial expansion), ancient Greece, and dynastic East Asia. Neither of these conceptions is incorrect. Modern nationalism in Western Europe, with its “image of civil inclusiveness is consistent with arguments that such nationalism did not begin to emerge until the causal processes of spreading vernacular, literacy, and industrialization had also become more inclusive in the eighteenth century for Europe.” Even before the Enlightenment, however, European states largely corresponded with a homogenous people – they already were nation-states. The focus on demarcating the age of nationalism in the eighteenth century disregards the earlier processes of homogenization that enabled the development of accountability and rule-of-law that characterize the modern nation-state.

“The roots of early nationalism are to be found in the territorial and monarchical states of Western Europe in the early modern period [as] these states extended their authority over their subjects and diminished that of other institutions.” As the Church as a legitimizing social force diminished, early European states shared an imperative to legitimate their role based on existing and salient social forces. “In the early modern era, religion was the popular passion.” Rulers and opposition forces alike appealed to
religion to harness its power of legitimation and “provide essential bonds of sentiment and organization.”

Rather than ethnicity, then, national identity in early modern Europe was steeped in another fixed-identity marker – religion. In the same way that ethnically based political rule results in an inequitable provision of public goods, the expansion of state power in early modern Europe involved patronage to the crown and the distribution of resources and influence via clientele networks.

Factions competed with one another for [patronage]. . . . Only if provincial and local interests had good court connections could they pick up cherished appointments . . . . Dissatisfied factions looked to more drastic ways of recovering their position. They might attempt to bring the monarchy under their control, a policy pursued by the Huguenots in the 1560s. They might look to separation, the eventual aim both of the Calvinist rebels in the Netherlands and of the Huguenots. But such moves could hardly be justified in terms of patronage squabbles . . . without a unifying and inspiring cause.

As states and opposition groups increasingly competed, religiously delineated nations achieved political salience, and “they took on the character of nation-states.” While religious identity was used to reify the nation-state, however, these nation-states were not yet modern – the state was not “an expression of the society it governed,” nor was the crown accountable to its subjects.

[Nonetheless, this was the] dawn of nationalism, . . . [when] the masses were tentatively invited, or more forcefully invited themselves, onto the stage of power politics. . . . They made their own entry on the basis of disputes over religion and with a binding violence enflamed by fear of animosity also inspired by faith. Seeking support and legitimacy, monarchs (or their opponents) learned to channel rising religious passion toward more secular and political issues.

Religion, then, drove the ideological narrative to define a coherent identity around which the state could centralize. In late-fifteenth century Spain, for example, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella harnessed popular resentment toward Jews, Moors, Moriscos, and Conversos to legitimize their rule over the Iberian Peninsula by defining the conditions for a coherent, religious identity to correspond with the nascent state. The forced conversions and expulsions that resulted drove a “path of forced homogenization” in which Catholicism was translated into a political identity to fit within the boundaries of a sovereign state.

A century later, France remained culturally and linguistically diverse. In 1598, after 40 years of civil war, the Edict of Nantes reconciled these divisions by
reestablishing Catholicism as the state religion but affording Protestants considerable freedom. By the late 1620s, however, Protestants were deprived of their political autonomy. The resulting mobilization of the French people inflamed Catholic passions directed against the Huguenot Protestants, a passion that the crown attempted to harness. “Violence below spun out of control from above, with monarchs and elites scurrying to retain some control or at least to benefit from factional loyalties.” The crown did survive the upheaval, which engaged and bounded the people of France, and ultimately strengthened the crown’s legitimacy by harnessing the identity of France to Catholicism.

In early-seventeenth century England, King Charles I steered the Church of England toward more orthodox Roman practices and steered the state toward a more absolute monarchy, which galvanized an increasingly resentful Protestant populace and their parliamentary representatives. “Passions of power and of faith came together in a powerful mix, giving impetus to a revolutionary conflict in which the head of church and of state lost his head,” and Oliver Cromwell instituted a military rule. Contrary to conventional accounts, then, the English Commonwealth was less a result of liberal motivations and more a result of anti-Catholic sentiments. After the Restoration of the English monarchy in 1660, the reactionary crown was “driven by a backlash against Puritan and parliamentary freedoms,” resulting in the great ejection of Puritans and Quakers from England to the New World, further homogenizing the English nation-state.

Throughout Europe, similar processes generated sustained conflict that splintered the mosaic of Europe’s religious and identity landscape. Protestantism started out as Lutheranism but quickly developed into Zwinglianism in Switzerland and Anabaptism in Germany, before sprouting a Calvinist version in France and an Anglican one in England. Calvinists and Lutherans often competed for influence and could be worse enemies of each other than either group was of the Catholics. The Catholic Habsburg dynasty that ruled the Holy Roman Empire worked tirelessly to nurture these divisions. In the end, however, this strategy failed to either weaken the Calvinists or prevent them from forming a united front with the Lutherans in the Thirty Years’ War.

The Peace of Westphalia that ended the Thirty Years’ War in 1648 institutionalized the territorial homogenization of Europe. Freed from the tutelage of the church, European
states were forced to legitimize “political authority in such a way that it was no longer upheld by reference to a divine will but by the ability to control a certain territory and the population living on it.”

Such an imperative was solved with mechanisms that enabled states to further consolidate into homogenous and coherent nation-states. “A cornerstone of the Westphalian doctrine was the *jus emigrandi*, the right to leave,” which implied a corresponding obligation for states to accept and protect refugees. “But Westphalia also allowed states to continue homogenization policies by expelling unwanted minorities.” The massive waves of refugees that resulted amounted “altogether to something like one million persons—an enormous number, given the size of populations at the time.” Thus Western Europe underwent a great sorting out of identities during the Wars of Religion, resulting in ideal states that corresponded with a nation to legitimate authority.

**Wave of Revolution: The First National Cascade, Redux**

The nation-state, however, is inconsistent with dynastic rule as a state deriving legitimacy from a nation must provide mechanisms by which the people who comprise the nation can hold the state accountable. As the state increasingly required consent from the people of every social class for taxation and military conscription to enable its activities, it increasingly was forced to account for the preferences of the people. Thus, a wave of revolutions followed on heels the Western European sorting out.

Such accountability, of course, was first demanded in France. Rather than seek collaboration from the Estates-General – the central representative assembly of France’s *ancien régime* – the French crown negotiated directly with a web of local institutions, constituting a clientele network that balanced central authority with collaborators’ close proximity to the people. During the eighteenth century, the crown attempted a number of reforms to emphasize the primacy of the crown over society that generated opposition to the crown’s growing absolutism, “an expression of the liberties of the nation” (*liberté*) and a resentment of privilege (*égalité*). Thus, in France, the notion was born that “the state should represent the interests of the whole society.” The depth of
the succeeding crisis prompted, for the first time since 1614, a convening of the Estates-General in 1789. Comprising three estates, or bodies, the First Estate represented the clergy, the Second Estate nobility, and the Third Estate commoners. Although the Third Estate was given augmented representation, voting was done by estate, rendering the extra representation symbolic only and giving the alliance between nobility and clergy an advantage. Reflecting the social demand for national representation, the Third Estate argued that there was a distinction “between the ‘legal’ and the ‘real’ nation. The liberties of the legal nation were based on historic privilege; those of the real nation upon natural right.” Thus the Third Estate – comprising a significant numerical advantage over the other two – formed the National Assembly, a new body based on individual votes to reflect the entire nation regardless of social class. “With the establishment of the National Assembly the ‘real’ nation came to be regarded as the source of legitimate political power,” and the ensuing French Revolution was the only available means to institutionalize it as such.

The national experiment was not confined to France, however, and an explicit objective of the Napoleonic Wars was not only to extend French power but to proliferate liberal values across Europe. Indeed, popular conscription and the wars between 1792-1815 made geopolitical rivalries and bogeymen more salient to the people, and the formation of the Holy Alliance in 1815 to buttress against nationalist movements legitimized the force of the modern nation-state. Thus dynastic Europe was transformed and the continent stained with the ideological power of liberalism.

The first wave of post-French Revolution national movements in Europe began in the 1820s, when Greece, Spain, and Naples all experienced revolutions. In England, the Napoleonic Wars galvanized liberal sentiment, aggravated by British-French competition, which resulted in the Great Reform Act of 1832, breaking “particularism, *

* While nationalist rhetoric may have served in some capacity to directly export nationalism during the Napoleonic Wars, “the arousal of counter-revolutionary popular responses sometime after the failure of the dynastic rulers, politicians, and diplomats to defend the people” from French invasion was another vital mechanism for the diffusion of nationalist sentiment. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South American, and Post-Communist Europe (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996): 21.
monarchical patronage and the power of the House of Lords. From 1830-1834, there were rebellions or revolutions in France, the Low Countries (essentially contemporary Belgium and the Netherlands), Poland, and Ireland. These were followed by revolutionary crises in France, Italy, Germany, Prussia, Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Switzerland, and Romania between 1847 and 1852. In each of these cases, social protest and mobilization were central to the revolutions against state authority perceived as illegitimate. While Marx ascribed these conflicts to class differences, the divisions that characterized these rebellions were factionally divided and driven by students, professionals, and officials – the classic drivers of modernization. Their growing awareness of inequity produced “misery that was especially concentrated in the cities. . . . Crises occurred when traditional political, economic, and social institutions were unable to cope” with the demand for accountability and legitimacy.

The institutionalization of interest-group struggle, especially between classes, solidified the nation-state in Western Europe as liberal, and its people as plural and stratified. States were already largely homogenized before political accountability was demanded, so political identity formed around the fluid identity markers of class and ideology rather than a fixed marker, such as ethnicity or religion that could be cleansed. Thus, the development of class and nation in Western Europe were closely entwined, restraining both nationalism and statism and ensuring toleration in Western Europe.

**Imperial Decay: The Second National Cascade**

The consolidation of the nation-state and the expansion of accountability occurred simultaneously in Central and Eastern Europe, coincident with the decline and fall of multiethnic empires. As these processes occurred together, violence in Eastern Europe did not manifest in waves of war – a wave of pathological homogenization and national consolidation followed by a wave of revolution for accountability. Such a late arrival of nationalist aspirations enabled political theory to mature in the notion that a nation-state must provide the pillars of a modern society to the entire nation, including the masses.

Modern societies unfolded within the confines of the nation-state and strengthened them with every step of development. On the one side, the modern
principles of democracy, citizenship and popular sovereignty allowed for the inclusion of large sections of the population previously confined to the status of subjects and subordinates. On the other, shadowy side, however, new forms of exclusion based on ethnic or national criteria developed.  

“The new states that emerged from the decay and disintegration of the Ottoman, Habsburg, and Romanov empires were all created as nation-states, legitimated by their claim to be the states of and for particular nations. All, moreover, were not only nation-states but nationalizing states.” As the three great empires fell after World War I, demands for representation entwined with ethnic and nationalist identities for whom the nation-state existed. It was on behalf of such identities that social mobilization drove policies designed to “promote . . . language, cultural flourishing, demographic predominance, economic welfare, or political hegemony.” The result was an organic – the people conceived of as one and indivisible, united, and integral; class conflict and sectional interests not to be compromised but transcended – rather than a liberal conception of the nation-state. Thus, nationalist movements organized around pillared identities trumped class and ideology as the defining political identity.  

Organic nationalism presented two potential vices. First, it tempted the transformation of democracy into authoritarian statism as, given the diversity of human communities, a state led by a single entity can speak with a singular essence that few parties can achieve. Second, perhaps more saliently, organic nationalism encouraged the exclusion of minority communities from full membership in the nation, as a people defined as single and united left no room for an opposition minority.  

From the breakup of three great empires emerged a multitude of new countries. “The immediate result was discrimination against minorities plus coerced emigration,” facilitating nearly 10 million European refugees by 1926. Once comprising half of the Eastern European population, minorities now comprised only a quarter of it as citizenship became defined through ethnicity. As organic nationalism surged through interwar East Europe, three main types of actors emerged: (1) national minorities forming a minority in their present state, (2) nationalizing states wherein the majority advocated a state that reflected only its identity, and (3) foreign homeland states of national minorities. In this interlaced manner, geopolitics played a moderating role that
tempered violence as nearly every national minority was the majority in a neighboring state.

After World War I, homogenization in Central Europe was achieved primarily by moving borders to align with populations. After World War II, populations were moved instead.78

Citing as precedent the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, which concluded that “only radically illiberal measures would eliminate the causes of ethnonational aspirations and aggression,” Winston Churchill explained in a speech to the British parliament in December 1944, “Expulsion is the method which, so far as we have been able to see, will be the most satisfactory and lasting. There will be no mixture of populations to cause endless trouble . . . A clean sweep will be made.”79

Poland was 68% Polish in 1938. By 1946 it was overwhelmingly Polish. Germany was nearly all German. Czechoslovakia, which was populated by 33% minorities . . . before the war, shed this third of its population. One can go down the line of Eastern European countries . . . and find the same ethnic cleansing and great sorting out . . . [Eastern and] Central European nation states were tidied up and their peoples rearranged according to nationality. Unlucky nationalities, such as the Jews and Gypsies that had no homeland, were in some cases exterminated.80

This great Eastern European sorting out did ultimately result in ideal nation-states. “For the most part, each nation in Europe had its own state, and each state was made up almost exclusively of a single ethnic nationality.”81 The few exceptions included the Soviet Union, which later broke apart into a variety of nation-states; Czechoslovakia, which separated peacefully in 1993; and Yugoslavia, the breakup of which in the 1990s and early 2000s represented “the last act of a long play.”82

These genocide and ethnic cleansing events have been characterized as uniquely modern phenomena in contrast to liberalization in nineteenth-century Western Europe, which occurred relatively peacefully. Indeed, massive refugee flows were not seen during the nineteenth-century wave of revolution because such a sorting out process had already occurred two centuries prior. By the twentieth century, however, this history was largely forgotten or recorded as something other than an identity-driven national cascade, and the mass persecution and cleansing against targeted and minority groups in Central and

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* The Treaty of Lausanne officially settled the conflict between the Ottoman Empire and Allied powers that had existed since World War I. The treaty forced Turkey to relinquish its claims to the remainder of the Ottoman Empire while the Allies recognized Turkish sovereignty within its new borders.
Eastern Europe during the decay of the multiethnic empires “appeared as a startlingly new phenomenon.”

A SET OF UNFORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCES: THE THIRD NATIONAL CASCADE

“‘History doesn’t repeat itself’, the saying goes, ‘but it does rhyme’. And the “great sorting out” is now occurring throughout many regions consisting of post-colonial fragile states. For example, the Jews – despite constituting the greatest single religious group in Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, and Aleppo in 1914 – have since been expelled, coalescing in Israel, from which they drove out the Palestinians. Christians have all but disappeared from many countries in the region, notably in Palestine and Iraq, and “the same thing is happening in Syria to Christians today.”

European “history shows that the current legitimacy crisis in the Middle East is neither unprecedented in its gravity nor likely to resolve itself in any straightforward way.” In the post-colonial developing world, the legacy of the Ottoman Empire produced a similar destabilizing sorting-out mechanism as did the fall of multiethnic empires in Central and Eastern Europe and the Wars of Religion in Western Europe. In Central and Eastern Europe, the bloody process of the great sorting out occurred during and after World War II. In Turkey, it occurred concurrent with and in the immediate aftermath of World War I. “Anatolia was 18% Christian in 1918. By 1922, they constituted less than 1% of Turkey’s population,” in a process that included the Armenian genocide. Throughout the rest of the former Ottoman Empire, however, just as the Ottomans mitigated identity-driven, sectarian conflict prior to World War I, colonial powers did the same in the interwar period, and the subsequent authoritarian regimes sprinkled throughout the region served as “little Ottoman Empires” to keep plural states stable after World War II.

As central authority, and these “little Ottoman Empires,” collapse and nationalist movements emerge in these multiethnic fragile states, however, the colonial legacy remains strong because colonialism destroyed existing political structures. Indeed, “colonial administration had to be done on the cheap and development would be a luxury beyond the reach of many colonies in most years and for a long time.”
Thus, the newly independent states that were left in the wake of imperial rule generally lacked the capacity to funnel social forces into a cohesive modern state. Colonial administration had often been given to local chiefs who were deliberately selected by the colonizers. Taking their example from “colonial officials [who] often behaved like tyrants,” they were far more despotic than traditional authorities, and they wielded the power associated with a modern European state in addition.

The legacy of European colonialism was not an “extractive” authoritarian state but rather the profound absence of strong institutions altogether. . . . There simply weren’t the time or resources to build institutions before demands for independence arose. . . . Due to the late start of colonialism, and its short duration, the colonial rulers succeeded in undermining existing traditional sources of authority while failing to implant anything like a modern state that could survive the transition to independence.

When a state fails to develop institutions that are robust enough to control or sufficiently channel social forces into legitimate institutions to aggregate and articulate those preferences, tensions often galvanize regime-threatening social mobilization. Thus, weak states will often amplify the strength of coercive institutions in the security sector to repress such mobilization. Paradoxically then, a weak state is often a brutal one.

Mirroring the sorting-out process in Eastern and Central Europe, of course, these states are modernizing in an era where political authority is derived from the people, who in much of the post-colonial developing world are divided into a complex and overlapping mosaic of social identity groups. Such a web is yet another colonial legacy; “among other things, imperial economic policies often entailed the forced relocation of populations from one part of the empire to another.” Moreover, colonial administrative units and political borders were designed by imperial powers not only arbitrarily in disregard for the populations’ identity structure but to manipulate identity boundaries to reinforce imperial authority and undermine indigenous resistance by disenabling the formation of any coherent political identity that could challenge imperial authority.

Political boundaries . . . cut across ethnic, tribal, religious, and linguistic ties; dismembered established political units; and linked more than one precolonial political entity in uneasy administrative unions. . . . As a result of such cavalier

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* The powers given to the new chief that they did not enjoy in their traditional role included the power to unilaterally take land, extract taxes, make formal law, and punish crimes.
construction of colonial borders, imperial powers bequeathed to their postcolonial successor regimes territorial entities that were composed of distinct and sometimes hostile ethnic groups or that divided previously homogeneous ethnic communities into two or more states. ⁹⁸

In the Levant, for example, Britain and France partitioned the region under the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 in such a way that divided it based on maximizing resource extraction and fortifying colonial authority. France designed the borders of Syria and Lebanon to safeguard the dominance of Maronite Christians while simultaneously ensuring they would need to depend on French assistance to maintain power. The British forged the new state of Iraq out of an “ahistorical amalgamation of three disparate Ottoman provinces” – Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul. ⁹⁹ Two years later, they divided the cohesive Palestinian state into a much smaller Palestine and Transjordan, which would later become Jordan, to accommodate European Zionist emigration. Worse, these states were designed without consideration for whether they had sufficient resources to sustain themselves. The Syrian borders were drawn in such a way that its oil reserves were segregated inside Iraq, crippling Syria’s capacity for economic development; producers were severed from their traditional markets, splintering local communities; and the resulting underdevelopment and inability of the state to develop robust and inclusive institutions fostered the minority regime that continues to rule today. Likewise, the geographically small statelets of Jordan, Israel, and Lebanon, with large populations and few natural resources, have resulted in perpetual dependency on remittances and aid. ¹⁰⁰

“The retreat of European colonial empires since World War II has made the variety of the human social condition far more spectacularly obvious than it was when colonial administrative cadres gave an outward appearance of uniformity to wide areas of the globe.”¹⁰¹ Despite this diversity, the modern liberal state is a one-size-fits-all political order for all states, and the only legitimate one recognized in the contemporary international system. But many post-colonial states derived their social-identity order from traditional kinship roles that made it “easy for persons from different linguistic or ethnic backgrounds to live together, mix, intermarry, and move about within and through whatever boundaries a sense of ethnicity imposed.”¹⁰² Modern states, however,
organize groups on a broader basis to gain a cohesive political presence. While traditional societies were often comprised of these myriad identity groups, Western conceptions of the nation-state equated stateness with its unitary, institutionalized form. Thus, the modern conception of the nation-state based on a coherent identity that is distinct from political factions was incompatible with the blurry identities found in many traditional societies.

While modernization generally will change and often disintegrate traditional political systems, its development frequently is arrested, and it does not always involve a corresponding movement toward inclusive and robust political institutions. Traditional polities are based on the principles of kin selection and reciprocal altruism whereby family or friends with whom favors are exchanged are privileged to receive public goods and benefits. Thus, “modern institutions require people to work contrary to their natural instincts.” A political system, to cope successfully with modernization, must innovate policy to promote social and economic reform. This is the “integrative revolution,” whereby new states “must reconcile [traditional attachments] with the unfolding civil order by divesting them of their legitimizing force with respect to government authority, by neutralizing the apparatus of the state in relationship to them, and by channeling discontent arising out of their dislocation into properly political rather than parapolitical forms of expression.” When modernizing societies fail to do so, it will augment the destabilizing consequences of politically salient pillared identities.

Colonial powers left in their wake a host of groups of greater or lesser cohesion, aggravating the already problematic task of creating a modern nation-state with underdeveloped, weak institutions. Indeed, independence is not a causal mechanism that automatically and spontaneously shifts an individual’s primary conception of identity from traditional ties that often constitute a mosaic within the state to modern national ones that correspond neatly with the state. The result is often a multiphased conflict whereby violence erupts between a colonial power or perceived despotic regime and a subjugated social group over state control or the creation of a new nation-state. Indeed here, the waves of nation-state formation and popular revolution have reversed –
whereas the nation-state was formed first in Western Europe, and the two developed simultaneously in Eastern Europe, newly independent fragile states generally experienced popular revolution against imperial authority prior to the consolidation of a coherent nation-state. When the reins of the oppressive power are thrown off, then, internal divisions that were previously bridged by a common cause can become exposed, fueling subsequent identity-driven conflict over which group should wield power. In short, the imperial or authoritarian power is a unifying factor for social groups in a struggle for independence against a common bogeyman. After independence, however, the unifying factor is removed, political parties factionalize around pillared identities, and “new incentives to protest and rebel . . . are created.

Indeed, in post-colonial fragile states, not only are traditional communities expected to consolidate a myriad of social forces and identity systems into a cohesive and centralized nation-state with robust and inclusive institutions – a process that occurred over centuries of bloody identity-driven conflict in Europe – but they are simultaneously expected to decentralize the power of those institutions by divesting legitimacy among an array of traditional identity groups while fostering a unified national identity. These intrinsic difficulties are amplified by the underdevelopment of these states. While regimes believe that a strong state will enable them to develop further, the meager material and institutional resources at their disposal prevent them from achieving the transformations and transaction required of a modern nation-state. “In the course of a desperate search for shortcuts, they are likely to avail themselves of more authoritarian means.”

Further tempting such authoritarianism, fragile state institutions and weak territorial control foster conditions of easy social mobilization susceptible to manipulation by rebellious non-state actors and opportunistic elites. “Resources, which can be distributed along [pillared identity] lines and thus used to consolidate . . . clienteles, provide further fuel for the dynamics of [identity-driven] competition and conflict.” This zero-sum dynamic is fueling the identity-driven conflicts pervading regions that consist of fragile post-colonial states wherein borders were arbitrarily – or worse manipulatively – drawn to pool and divide social identity groups within and across
states in such a way that cohesive political identities could not form to challenge colonial authority or subsequently develop effective administrative orders. Thus, poorly organized civil and political society, exclusive development of institutions and infrastructure that precludes the formation of crosscutting cleavages, and partial or incomplete liberal reforms are highly vulnerable to factional dynamics that amplify rather than bridge complex identity divisions and rivalries.¹¹⁶

What we are seeing right now is the breakdown of another imperial system: from Libya through Syria, across the greater Middle East, there was a stable order. It was an order of secular dictatorships that were supported by superpowers 30 to 40 years ago. That order has collapsed for a whole variety of reasons. . . . And so what you discover in that part of the world is that when you get rid of the regime, it turns out there is no state under it. It turns out there is no civil society under the state, and in many cases it turns out that there is no nation under all of that. So what people are grasping for are their ascriptive identities, their oldest identities: Shia, Sunni, Kurd, Arab, Druze. And that is the great drama we are witnessing.¹¹⁷

**Schelling’s Long Shadow**

**All Good Things**

Samuel Huntington began his seminal work stating, “the most important political distinction among countries concerns not their form of government but their degree of government. . . . There is no greater necessity for men who live in communities than that they be governed, self-governed if possible, well-governed if they are fortunate, but in any event governed.”¹¹⁸ Indeed, fragile states – the failure of institutionalization to keep pace with popular demands for accountability and the poor governance that results – represent the most important factor driving the identity-driven conflict pervading the contemporary post-colonial developing world.¹¹⁹

This proposition begs the question, ‘How does good governance emerge . . . ?’ Does it rise like a Phoenix from the ashes? Does it gallop in on its trusty steed from over yonder hill? Does it wake suddenly in a cold sweat as the innocent do from a seemingly interminable nightmare? Does it drop like manna from the heavens? . . . Hence the conundrum.¹²⁰

Thus, a contradiction lies at the very essence of liberalization and political modernization, which simultaneously involves the consolidation of social forces and the dispersal of that very power.

The problem is at root one of legitimacy. The legitimacy of the reforms depends on the authority of [a centralized power]. But legitimacy of the political system
in the long run depends on the participation within it of a broader range of social groups... The power which is significantly concentrated ... to promote reform may become too concentrated to assimilate the social forces released by reform. 121

"At the core of state-building is the creation of a government that has a monopoly of legitimate power and that is capable of enforcing rules throughout the state’s territory. . . . The promotion of liberal democracy, on the other hand, involves putting constraints on that very power." 122 Indeed, before a state can constrain power, it must have the ability to employ it. 123 “Order must come before freedom, for without a reasonable degree of administrative order, freedom can have little value.” 124 Robust and effective institutions, therefore, are often of a greater imperative than democracy. Of the three core pillars of political modernity, democratic and electoral procedures for accountability are far easier to construct than either a cohesive national identity or a robust institutional system. Thus, the development of modern states has not kept pace with the development of democratic procedures. 125 In much of the post-colonial developing world, the end of the Cold War and the universal institutionalization of democratic ideals have transformed the last multicultural empires into modern states before strong civil societies with crosscutting affiliations or a shared national identity were able to develop. The result of weak civil society and flimsy state institutions is the unequal distribution of resources across social identity groups, which fosters power competition and ethnic politicization. Thus, in “newly nationalizing states, politics is . . . quickly transformed into an arena of ethnonationalist competition.” 126

Americans assume a “unity of goodness”: that all good things like democracy, economic development, social justice and so on go together. But for many places

* Whereas liberalization represents the move toward political modernity – legitimacy as a nation-state, differentiation of political institutions, and procedures of accountability – democratization represents the move toward democracy as a means of ensuring and proceduralizing accountability. Conceived in the Dahlian sense, democracy will be used synonymously with polyarchy, which can take the form of democracy (in the sense of direct rule) or republic (in the sense of representative rule). It is “a system . . . of political control in which the highest officials in the government of the state are induced to modify their conduct so as to win elections in political competition with other candidates, parties, and groups; as a system of political rights [enforced equally across all citizens and social identity groups belonging to the nation-state]; [and] as a set of institutions necessary to the democratic process on a large scale.” Thus is the delta between liberalization (the move toward political modernity to include constructing national legitimacy, developing a functionally differentiated institutional system, and implementing procedures of accountability) and democratization (implementing electoral procedures of accountability). Robert Dahl, Democracy and its Critics (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 218-219, 155-156.
with different historical experiences based on different geographies and circumstances that isn’t always the case. . . . American history was usually how to limit government . . . but many countries in the developing world are saddled either with few institutions or illegitimate ones . . . so that they have to build an administrative order from scratch. . . . Only once order is established can popular pressure be constructively asserted to make such order less coercive and more institutionally stable.\textsuperscript{127}

Indeed, many states with high-performing governments – such as China, Japan, Germany, France, and Denmark – created modern authoritarian states with strong Weberian institutions before extending the franchise to the people. Those that subsequently democratized inherited and leveraged the existing state apparatus. In contrast, “where the democratic opening preceded state reform, the result has often been widespread clientelism.”\textsuperscript{128} Indeed, “in many countries that are not yet consolidated democracies, a nation-state policy often has a different logic than a democratic policy. . . . A democracy requires a definition of the \textit{demos}. Already the notion of \textit{demos} as ‘the people’ raises a question: Who are the people?\textsuperscript{129}

Defining “the people” in an environment where “different sections of the population perceive each other as strangers, sometimes as aliens, increasingly as rivals, and ominously as potential enemies” is near impossible.\textsuperscript{130} Under such conditions, traditional pillared identities most often became the basis of political contestation. The resulting “polar factionalism,” whereby political factions are formed from pillared identities, is characterized by “an ‘unnatural alliance’ of social identity and political interest group” wherein “parochial or ethnic-based political factions . . . regularly compete for political influence in order to promote particularist agendas and favor group members to the detriment of common, secular, or cross-cutting agendas.”\textsuperscript{131} The result is a competition for power wherein Schelling’s dilemma casts a long shadow. “The ‘groupness’ of the ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic collectives that emerge from collapsed empires gives each of them an inherent offensive military power. . . . The drive for security in one group can be so great that it [often] produces near-genocidal behavior towards neighbouring groups.”\textsuperscript{132}

In short, when political factions are formed from pillared identities, members of one political faction are restricted from moving into another, resulting in perpetually disenfranchised minority factions with no hope of ever gaining a political plurality in a
minority-rules system. Alternatively, minority regimes propped up by colonial power may rely disproportionately on coercive measures to retain power. Absent a stake in the state, subjugated individuals may resort to revolutionary tactics, magnifying the fears of the ruling group by confirming them. Thus, instability explodes as the ruling regime increases its repression to suppress the revolutionary social identity group. As political parties become inflexible and identity becomes existential, out-group factions rebel to change the system, the ruling regime and its support base resort to despotism to repress the revolutionary social forces, and conflict becomes endemic. “In country after country, a single ethnic group has taken control over the state and used its powers to exercise control over others. . . . In retrospect, there has been far less ‘nation-building’ than many analysts had hoped, for [modernization] has rendered many ethnic groups devoid of power and influence.”

Democracy is, indeed, a more inclusive, more accountable, more equitable and universalistic form of politics than humanity has known before – except for those who remain outside the doors of the newly constructed national home and for those who are not recognised as its legitimate owners despite occupying one of its rooms. . . . [Thus], nationalist and ethnic politics are not merely by-products of modernisation; rather modernity itself is structured according to ethnic and nationalist principles, because modern institutions of inclusion (citizenship, democracy, welfare) are systematically tied to ethnic and national forms of exclusion.

Thus, “in areas where that separation has not yet occurred, politics is apt to remain ugly.”

STATE-MAKING AND NATION-BUILDING; NATION-BUILDING AND STATE-MAKING

The nation-state is the only form of political unit permitted and recognized as legitimate in the contemporary global structure. Defined by the overlap of the political and national units achieved by the consolidation of a common national identity, nation-building is thus the process through which a national identity that corresponds with the borders of a given state is constructed. Whereas state-making is essentially structural in nature, nation-building “emphasizes the cultural aspects of political development. It refers to the process whereby people transfer their commitment and loyalty from smaller tribes, villages, or petty principalities to the larger central political system.” With a single government for the territory; unitary education, economic, and occupation
systems; and ideally one set of rights for all citizens, they “subscribe, tacitly or openly, quietly or vociferously, to a single ideology which legitimates the whole enterprise – nationalism.”

In modernizing states with lower degrees of political centralization and reduced capacity to provide public goods, as well as in societies with weakly developed networks of voluntary organizations, political alliances and identities tend to form along ethnic, rather than national, lines. The ruling elites thus favor their co-ethnics over all others when it comes to providing public goods or shaping public policies. This may trigger the second conflict-generating mechanism [as] . . . leaders of excluded groups can now decry the breach of the principle of ethnic self-rule and demand a nation-state of their own . . . . They can now evoke the very principles of nationalism . . . to legitimize their claims and mobilize followers.

While nationalism can be dangerous, as it tempts violence and coercion to enforce a defined national identity and motivates secessionist wars against alien rule, a strong sense of national identity also is a necessary component of building the nation-state, as it delegitimizes absolute authority, despotic rule, and patrimonial or patronage systems. Indeed, “much of what passes for corruption is not simply the matter of greed but rather the by-product of legislator or public officials who feel more obliged to family, tribe, region, or ethnic group than to the national community.” National identity, then, is a key prerequisite to political order.

“The presence of a culturally homogeneous population no doubt lowered the cost of state-making by making uniform administrative arrangements feasible . . . and by putting ready-made communication systems at the disposal of the rulers.” “Almost the only democratic possibilities” to cultivate a cohesive national identity out of heterogeneous societies “are voluntary cultural assimilation, voluntary exit, or peaceful creation of new territorial boundaries, financially supported and monitored by the international community, and accepted by all the political leaders. These are truly heroic (and empirically and democratically difficult) assumptions.” To enable such heroics, state institutions need to be strong enough to maintain political control, rule of law, and accountability while inclusively aggregating, articulating, funneling, negotiating, compromising, and reflecting the demands and preferences of all salient identity groups and social forces. Still, ethnic homogeneity is not strictly necessary. Indeed, the presence of myriad identity groups forces the government to involve coalitions among them,
fostering crosscutting affiliations. The resulting channels of communication mute conflict, “and common laws and common institutions [create] a greater sense of identity.” Thus multi-ethnicity is not generally very dangerous; rather, the dangerous cases are states encompassing two or three pillared identity groups wherein one group can form a government and perpetually discriminate against the other. To guard against such dynamics, strong and inclusive political institutions are required to generate crosscutting cleavages to encourage the formation of fluid identity groups and mitigate the lack of cohesion within a newly independent, multi-ethnic state by bridging disparate social identity groups.

When modernization leads to highly centralized states and mobilized masses, state elites hold political decision-making power over the entire territory and provide most public goods . . . . This allows them to break out of the elite coalition to which they had confined their alliances in the pre-modern period. They now link up to the masses, across existing ethnic and status divides . . . . Corresponding to this inclusionary and encompassing alliance system, the nation as a mode of identification replaces the older estate order . . . . Thus . . . a state built on coercive resource extraction . . . [is] replaced with a state held together by . . . a shared national identity. . . . Nation building and the politicization of ethnic divisions are both the result of political modernization, but represent different equilibrium outcomes . . . . Weakly centralized states will not see durable alliances with all segments of the population and nationalism will not spread and become adopted as a main framework of identity.

Indeed, state-making “and nation-building are two overlapping but conceptually and historically different processes.” Thus a paradox of modernization: as nation-building is a prerequisite for state-making, so too is state-making a prerequisite for nation-building.
CHAPTER 5
CATCHING MICE
STAINED THUMBS

The modern nation-state has become ubiquitous. Indeed, rather than a story of state fragmentation, the instability and identity-driven conflict pervading much of the post-colonial developing world is instead a story of nation-state formation. The result has been a national cascade precipitating the instability endemic to regions consisting of modernizing states wherein national identities are being defined and sorted out into discrete nations and coextensive states, often pathologically. In an era when societies are expected to liberalize concomitant with nation-state formation, modernization is proceeding in fits and starts as the dual imperatives of nation-building and state-making collide haphazardly. The paradox of modernity is not a catch-22, however, but a long-term iterative process. Nation-building and state-making are mutually reinforcing; inclusive and robust institutional capacity begets national legitimacy begets conditions favorable for democratic accountability. Elections are the goal of responsible governance not the means to it.

Yet when the political dimensions of development fail to keep pace with social mobilization, “there can be a corresponding failure of state institutions to keep up with the development of democratic ones.” Indeed, electoral procedures are easier to construct than a cohesive nation-state, which involves two further and intimately interdependent stages. The first corresponds to state-making by constructing the institutional capacity to aggregate, articulate, channel, and reflect social forces to provide fundamental public goods and services equitably. Without robust, inclusive institutions, the state will delegitimize itself as it aggravates relative deprivation among identity groups by distributing goods along patronage or routinized networks that favor some groups over others, inhibiting the formation of a cohesive national identity.

*“Relative deprivation is defined as actors’ perceptions of discrepancy between their value expectations . . . and their value capabilities.’ Relative deprivation . . . relates the source of conflict to whether decision making and implementation of decisions are to the benefit of the
Accordingly, the second stage concerns nation-building: the organization of social forces into fluid political factions that are subordinate to a national identity, can peacefully and legitimately contest elections, and can hold the state accountable. Without a cohesive nation, political identities become pillared, the ruling regime becomes rigid and perpetual, political power becomes existentially threatening, and the social system crystalizes into a brittle zero-sum game.

Thus, the sequence by which political modernization occurs has a determinant effect on viability of democratic governance.

Democracy requires a foundational consensus based on deliberative and negotiated dispute resolution; it cannot manage anarchy, and is quickly overwhelmed by the dissonant cacophony of demands stimulated by survival imperatives. . . . Whereas the collective decision to adopt democratic practice is often momentous, the institutionalization and consolidation of democratic process requires considerable time, even under the most favorable conditions. The myth of democratic revolution creates a “revolutionary” expectation of immediate “off-the-shelf” democracy and universal welfare in lesser developed societies.⁴

Revolutionary democracy is indeed a myth, and democratization has historically been accompanied by corresponding instability as “the agony of liberalization” in emerging democracies inherently breeds conflict among the assortment of social forces vying for political power.⁵ In mosaic post-colonial or post-revolutionary societies wherein ascriptive belonging provides security in an uncertain environment, “the stroke-of-the-pen or crack-of-the-whip measures” to white-wash the existence of these identities tends to “exacerbate what they sought to eradicate” by increasing insecurity.⁶ The simple existence of a pluralist society consisting of several fixed-identity groups is not inherently a powder-keg, however; it is only when such groups become pillared and politically salient – when self-rule and political factions are defined along fixed-identity markers – that identity-driven conflict results. The fundamental question to grapple with in unstable regions consisting of post-colonial fragile states, then, is how to encourage fluid

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political parties out of states comprising a complex mosaic of ascriptive social identities.

THE SIRENS’ SONGS

Partition represents an enticing simple solution to resolving intense communal conflicts. Indeed, homogeneity makes the task of constructing a national identity far easier. While homogenization inevitably creates new flows of refugees, it at least attempts to deal with the root of the problem by generating two homogenous nation-states.7 “Whatever the costs of cultural heterogeneity,” however, “the costs of eliminating heterogeneity (at least in the short term) are surely higher.”8 The assumption that partition will result in homogenous states, moreover, is false. In fact, “the only thing secession and partition are unlikely to produce is ethnically homogenous or harmonious states.”9 Indeed, rare is the secessionist region that is truly homogenous, and identity, as a social construct, is not static or primordial. The change in environment generated by the change in territorial borders, then, will increase the political salience of the ascriptive cleavages that were previously bridged by the common cause of secession. In secessionist regions that are largely homogenous, pathological homogenization to cleanse ethnic strangers can be expected after independence. “Increased conflict—or much worse—is the likely result.”10

Even, in the unlikely event, should partition generate homogenous nation-states, discrete ethnic groups left behind in the rump state, and indeed worldwide, could become emboldened to seek their own nation-state in a massive demonstration effect.11 And rare, too, is the regime that will accede to secession amicably.12 Between rump states and secessionist regions, then, such a thaw in the “freeze of territorial legacies,” eroding the norm that state borders are no longer fixed or sacred as currently constructed, could open Pandora’s Box by re-legitimizing territorial conquest.13 The result would be a far more volatile and dangerous world in the short term, and the emergence of far too many polities for the current international system to absorb in the long term.14 In an emerging global structure wherein stability is key, partition as a strategy to pacify national cascades fails.
Territorial autonomy is another seductive, short-cut solution to complex social dynamics that deals only with the symptom of ethnic tensions not the underlying causes. By partitioning off minority groups into coherent geographic areas, autonomy maintains and indeed fortifies the divisions that foster tension and conflict. It segregates minority groups into territorially discrete areas, discouraging meaningful dialogue and inhibiting the formation of crosscutting cleavages. Worse, such segregation may foster ghettoization, as autonomous regions may not contain the resources necessary to sustain developing communities, ethnically distinct regions encourage policies to subjugate or cleanse ethnic strangers contained within, and geographically concentrated communities provide Machiavellian elites with ready-made patronage networks to manipulate social mobilization and fuel further conflict. Thus, autonomy is often little more than a stepping stone for secessionist movements.

Finally, proportional representation and consociational democratic systems comprise a third alluring solution that provides a false veil of complexity. Such systems intrinsically assume that ethnic cleavages are enduring and essential rather than socially constructed. They take as a model the small, multiethnic European states such as Belgium and Switzerland to design a government that guarantees representation to all salient identity groups to enable discursive negotiation among ethnic leaders as a step toward accommodation.

The difficulty is in ascertaining whether the moderation and fluidity that characterize the European cleavages have been produced by consociational arrangements or whether, on the contrary, the relatively low intensity and fluidity of the European conflicts are what make consociational relationships possible. . . . So long as it is plausible that the level and character of the European conflicts were such as to facilitate the emergence of consociational practices, there is a circularity of cause and effect in consociational theory.

Consociational designs are elite-driven and emphasize the ability and freedom of group leaders to enter such arrangements. Indeed, few social groups are endowed with only one clear leader, so “the very act of forming a multiethnic coalition generates
intraethnic competition—flanking—if it does not exist already.” Thus, such freedom by
eлитes rarely exists in reality, and leaders remain beholden to the particularistic
preferences of their group rather than the imperative of discursive negotiation and
compromise to enable ethnic accommodation. In a two-party system based upon fluid
political factions, the majority becomes synonymous with the state while the minority
works to become the majority, thus giving both parties a stake in the state. This
emphasis of state over ideology creates stability by checking against the creep toward
totalitarianism. In consociational systems, however, no single party will – by design –
ever achieve a majority; thus, parties have fewer stakes in the state and are likely to
transform into movements. Movements, as opposed to parties, will sacrifice the state for
the sake of ideology. Regimes that claim to have achieved consociational democracy,
then, are more likely to have achieved an ethnically exclusive dictatorship. By ensuring
that ascriptive identity groups remain politically salient, these systems institutionalize
the pillared identity divisions that are poisonous to the eventual consolidation of a
coherent national identity.

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Geertz’s exploration of the integrative revolution concluded that modernizing
states cannot simply “wish [ascriptive identities] out of existence.”

[Indeed,] ethnic divides are culturally meaningful [and] consequential for the
allocation of resources and the distribution of life chances . . . . Ethnic boundary
making is driven by hierarchies of power and prestige and is meant to stabilize
and institutionalize these hierarchies. . . . [Identity frames the] struggles over
who is what and who should get what . . . . State institutions [have the power] to
classify individuals . . . . [and] a boundary can be stable . . . even if individuals shift
from one side to the other.

At its core, identity-driven conflict revolves around access to and control over the
nation-state. In this way, rather than the “cultural stuff” enclosed inside social identity
groups or the fixed, ascriptive markers used to define those identities, “it is the boundary
between groups and the transactions across them that perpetuate ethnic ties.” Thus,
the essential element of ethnic boundaries – the “shifting interactions” among them – is
malleable; conflict is mutable. Such plasticity of political identity is a core feature that
enables the human capacity for multiple and complementary identities, an essential element for stable democracy in plural societies.\textsuperscript{27}

Throughout the post-colonial developing world, “country after country has acquired a written constitution, elections, political parties, bureaucracies, and courts. What was copied was all too often more outward form than inner substance, however.”\textsuperscript{28} Elections, when held before pliable political identities are institutionalized in a society, are likely to manifest as little more than an ethnic census, yielding a rigid political system and precipitating conflict. “The goal of state building,” then, “should be not democratic promotion but conflict resolution.”\textsuperscript{29}

While nationalism and social identity can be subject to transformation, it is neither fragile nor infinitely malleable.\textsuperscript{30} Such transformation is beyond the scope of traditional strategies of conflict resolution focused on ceasefires; peacekeeping; disarming, demobilizing, and reintegrating armed forces; and negotiating democratic transitions – resolving identity-driven conflict requires more than negotiating positions, facilitating outcomes, and delivering settlements. Indeed, such strategies correspond only to an initial state of the iterative development process in post-conflict states. In this stage, the primary concern is a modicum of human security in the short term – humanitarian assistance, “infusions of security forces, police, humanitarian relief, and technical assistance to restore electricity, water, banking and payment systems, and so on.”\textsuperscript{31} Such palliative assistance provides the capacity to deliver essential public goods where the state itself lacks that capacity.\textsuperscript{32} Its immediate goals are to ensure human security by providing capacity and distributing fundamental public goods, mitigating threats to civilian populations, and enforcing the R2P doctrine by providing a real deterrent capability and reliable third-party information to alleviate acute fears on all sides; negotiate an end to armed conflict; and emplace mechanisms to enforce the terms thereof.\textsuperscript{33}

In addition to palliative humanitarian assistance, however, conflict transformation requires ameliorative development aid to enable sustainable institutions and foster a national identity that can survive the withdrawal of international donors.\textsuperscript{34} “Conflict transformation is . . . a process of engaging with and transforming the
relationships, the interests, the discourses, and, if necessary, the very constitution of society . . . It aims to develop capacity and support structural change.”35 In an environment of deep-seated identity contestations, a multistranded and iterative approach for conflict transformation that accounts for the “specific constellations of power and the interests of all the major actors” is necessary.36 In the multiethnic states that comprise most of the post-colonial developing world, this implies ethnic-boundary making: changing identity divisions in a way that “they might move across a landscape, become porous and inconsequential, be crisscrossed by other, more meaningful boundaries, or perhaps even dissolve altogether.”37

COVENANTS WITHOUT A SWORD38

The modes of boundary making are diverse. Boundaries can be expanded through nation-building processes that incorporate multiple groups into an existing one, amalgamating a variety of groups into a new category, or emphasizing a higher level of distinction.39 The key to each of these modes is the development of crosscutting affiliations. Dialogue projects are a vital first step in the short term, for “as long as you’re talking, you can’t be shooting.”40 In the long term, dialogue frames the discourse of nation-building and state-making processes moving forward by “formulating the differing points of view, . . . reflecting on the underlying needs and fears, . . . identifying shared interests, . . . and securing understanding on the substantive issues in dispute.”41 Dialogue projects can begin to build trust and confidence among social groups and between the state and society through collaborative, “inclusive enough” coalitions that incorporate each salient social force and identity group in the negotiation and design of the liberalizing state.42 Such coalitions may face considerable resistance in post-conflict societies wherein trust is lacking and the prisoner’s dilemma makes it difficult for individuals to “make credible ex ante commitments where substantial ex post temptations exist to break them” unless an external agent exists to enforce them.43 Despite such Hobbesian logic, however, “experiments suggest that covenants, even without a sword, have some force . . . [and] covenants with an internal sword” in the form of institutional design may be even more effective than external enforcers.44
Policymakers . . . should not presume that the individuals involved are caught in an inexorable tragedy from which there is no escape. Individuals may be able to arrive at joint strategies to manage [their high-demand, low-density] resources more efficiently. To accomplish this task, they must have sufficient information to pose and solve the allocation problems they face. They must also have an arena where they can discuss joint strategies and perhaps implement monitoring and sanctioning. In other words, when individuals are given an opportunity to restructure their own situation, they frequently—but not always—use this opportunity to make credible commitments and achieve higher joint outcomes without an external enforcer.45

While there may be considerable popular pressure against such coalitions that include personnel from the former regime, such coalitions are vital as they endow the development and transition process with perspectives, personnel, and skills required for governing that are quite distinct from those of the opposition.46

Enforcement and institutional design are codified in a modern state’s constitution, and the constitution-making process presents a convenient arena for early dialogue. Indeed, discussion and inclusive participation during the initial drafting of a constitution may yield “greater consequences for democratization than” popular involvement during "subsequent ‘debate’ and ‘ratification’ stages. . . . ‘Buy in’ at the front end needs to complement legitimation at the ‘back end’.”47 Political parties are vital to organizing such discursive participation. Well-organized and programmatic parties formed around class, geographic, or ideological lines – rather than pillared social identities – can engage people, “mobilize effective pressure, organize sustainable support for policies, channel public demands, and identify and promote skilled leaders.”48

The initial trust generated from inclusive dialogue projects to set the framework for

*Where demands for [ascriptive] preferences prove impossible to ignore, a promising approach might be to use territory in lieu of ethnicity to define the preferred category. . . . Territorial criteria have the advantage of being less rigidly and invidiously ascriptive than ethnic criteria, even when there is considerable overlap between territorial and ethnic boundaries. . . . Policymakers need to know that there are alternatives to preferences that cost more in initial expenditure, but may cost less a short way down the road . . . Many of the current economic disparities between ethnic groups are . . . largely traceable to accidents of colonial location. Groups near a port, a mission school, a colonial capital or commercial center obtained a head-start that they retained. Location policy and investment policy in general may well be more efficacious than preferential policies in reducing ethnic conflict. They have, in addition, the distinct political advantage that they spread the costs of redressing disparities widely and fairly, rather than inflicting the costs on individual competitors whose discontent can form the basis for serious political conflict.” Donald Horowitz, Ethnic Groups in Conflict (Berkeley: University of California Press, [1985] 2000), 679-680.
liberalization can catalyze the virtuous cycle that can ultimately enable transition to a fully institutionalized, liberal, and modern nation-state.

**CAPACITY BUILDING AND ETHNIC BOUNDARY MAKING**

The subsequent state-making and institutional reforms require capacity, which is scarce in fragile, developing post-colonial states. “The international community is not simply limited in the amount of capacity it can build; it is actually complicit in the destruction of institutional capacity in many developing countries.” Indeed, international organizations are beholden more to donors and immediately quantifiable results than to the long-term prognosis of the beneficiary country. When faced with the option of enabling a country to build its own capacity and providing that capacity themselves, then, aid programs often opt to directly provide goods and services. However, “when the external aid agency bypasses the local government, the local government’s function is less one of service provision than of liaison . . . . The local bureaucracy learns the wrong kind of skills [and] never takes ownership.”

The result is a vicious cycle as the lack of [local] involvement in the design of the international programs leads to local resistance and adaptation. The misappropriation of funds and the local reluctance to contribute to international efforts fuel the interveners’ views of local populations and authorities as corrupt, lazy, untrustworthy, and incapable of sacrificing themselves for the public good. This negative perception . . . reinforces the tendency of internationals to substitute themselves for their [local] partners instead of engaging in capacity building, ensuring local authorship, and promoting local ownership. This reaction crowds out local initiatives . . . and thus leads to additional local resistance and adaptation.

Indeed, capacity necessarily involves providing goods and services “in spatially and temporally unique settings. While something can indeed be said about forestry, revolution, urban planning, agriculture, and settlement in general, this will take us only so far in understanding *this* forest, *this* revolution, *this* farm.” Thus, a pragmatic and contextually aware “‘best-fit’ approach and careful prioritization [of capacity building over service provision] and sequencing go hand in hand.”

Such idiosyncratic programming begs for a decentralized system that places an emphasis on local infrastructure attuned and targeted to the specific composition and needs of a community and to bring the government closer to the people. The resulting “density of government structure in terms of . . . local and regional representation . . . can
generate more feedback loops and increase the overall level of accountability to which
government is subject.\textsuperscript{55} Furthermore, decentralized infrastructure can ensure inclusive
institutional reach, protecting territorially concentrated social identity groups from
abuse or neglect, encouraging the formation of multiple and complementary identities,
and acting “as a pressure valve for nationalist aspirations.”\textsuperscript{56} The danger, of course, is
ethnic autonomy where identity groups are concentrated territorially. Thus,
decentralization must be deliberately designed “to a level below that of major ethnic,
linguistic, or other identity groups” rather than corresponding with them.\textsuperscript{57} As such,
rather than ethnically discrete regional administrative units that may stoke separatist
designs, power and administration at the local level “will create many units of any given
ethnicity, and most likely some that are mixed. As a result, government will not be
associated with any particular ethnicity, nor with ethnicity per se; rather, service
provision will be the main measure by which government is judged.”\textsuperscript{58} Where local
government controls infrastructure and service provision, national elections become less
existentially threatening, solving the zero-sum problem inherent in plural states.\textsuperscript{59}

[In a decentralized government,] opportunities to participate in public decision
making abound. Thus experience accrues and learning occurs among individual
voters and their small-scale collectives (civic groups, local lobbies). Participation
in local government leads naturally to social learning around narrow questions of
effectiveness, but also higher-order learning about fellow citizens’ needs, resource
constraints, and the efficacy of public versus private action for certain classes of
problems. The experience of working together teaches people to work together
better. This leads to gradual convergence of individuals’ perspectives around local
needs and standards of service delivery, generating greater political legitimacy.
An inclination toward conflict and contestation can be transformed into
regularized interaction and cooperation.\textsuperscript{60}

As such, social norms do not flow in only one direction – from society to
institutions – but also from institutions to society. The resulting interactions across
social identity groups generate crosscutting cleavages and affiliations, and affinities are
built among the individuals involved, nurturing a nascent national identity. To break
cycles of insecurity and conflict, then, democratization will need to initially be put aside
in favor of inclusive “institutions that can provide a sustained level of citizen security,
justice, and jobs—offering a stake in” the state to all social groups contained therein.\textsuperscript{61}
These institutions should draw capacity and resources from the central government, thus
bestowing perceptions of legitimacy on the state, but delivered via locally designed and
maintained infrastructure to ensure the goods and services are provided efficiently and inclusively to reduce perceptions of relative deprivation. Thus, the “major precondition for the stability of a multiethnic nation is the existence of dense transethnic networks of civil-society organizations,” political community bodies, institutional capacity, and service provision infrastructure.

A thick context of . . . institutions, values, interest-group bargains, or social ties is needed to channel [the spectrum of social forces] into [inclusive] directions. . . . [This includes] a strong framework of state power to channel civic participation . . ., a dense web of social relationships built up through participation in nonpolitical voluntary organizations . . ., strong liberal norms, not simply democratic procedure per se, . . . and well-constructed political bargains between elements of the . . . state and social interest groups.

By networking local administration and the central state together and providing institutional reforms that unite rather than divide identities, interaction across groups will ameliorate inter-group fears and rivalries, precipitating the gradual development of a broader national identity. By delivering on reforms, the state will foster further trust and draw social groups closer together, thus enabling further reforms to democratize the nation-state by enacting mechanisms of political accountability.

Identity-driven conflict is fueled not by ethnicity itself, but by its politicization. Thus, premature democratization in post-colonial developing states is likely to foster conflict and instability as political factions form along fixed-identity markers. The overriding policy goal, then, should not be simply democratic procedures but “peaceful transition” and liberalization, emphasizing early dialogue; responsible governance with dense, robust, and inclusive institutions that foster crosscutting cleavages; and fluid political identities that can mute identity-driven conflict. Only then can norms and procedures of democratic accountability constrain state power without aggravating identity conflict. “Key variables in the modernization process may be viewed as historical phases, with democracy part of later developments, the ‘crowning institution of the participant society’.” Indeed, elected governments cannot be de facto equated with good governance, and nonelected governments can choose to govern responsibly in such a way that enables the iterative process of modernization. Palliative conflict resolution and dialogue projects will build confidence in the state, enabling inclusive institutional capacity building to legitimize the state and cultivate a national identity, which can
finally be leveraged to institute electoral mechanisms for accountability. Indeed, a stained thumb is not the measure of good governance; rather, elections are the crowning jewel of it.

THE BALLAD OF THE EAST AND WEST

THE WESTERN BURDEN: A MONASTIC STANDARD OF CIVILIZATION

Rather than a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach . . . that presses for the same liberal [shock therapy] reforms everywhere, individual countries need to be differentiated according to their capacity to absorb disruptive shifts in unregulated power . . . . Rather than a moralistic approach, a more politically astute, balanced, holistic, and contextualized approach needs to be taken [regardless of the actual form of government].

Indeed, the contemporary global structure is a plural one consisting of ecumenical constellations that embody diverse constructions of modernity. The Dahlian conception of democracy is not the only legitimate architecture for liberalization – robust, inclusive institutions; national legitimacy; and responsible governance “can emerge in arenas other than electoral ones.” Whereas the Lockean liberal conception that has guided the universal democratization efforts in U.S. foreign policy conceives of the public interest as indivisible from the aggregated preferences of the individuals in a society, there is another conception of liberal governance whereby the state is “the guardian of the public interest standing above the particular interests of the state’s citizens.”

Rather than a monastic and moralistic universalism to enforce a standard of civilization, the fundamental and necessary condition for stability in a plural society is intersectionality – the existence of crosscutting cleavages to encourage overlapping affiliations, iterative interactions, and fluid boundaries of salient identity. This condition holds true not only in national societies but also in the global society. Given the primary role played by fragile, modernizing states in driving instability worldwide, the U.S. must reorient its conception of stabilization away from military interventions designed to remake the world in its image. Indeed, military intervention has been the historical means of stabilization during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries – of the twenty nine foreign-imposed regime changes the U.S. has participated in since the turn of the twentieth century, twenty five were military interventions, including every one
since 1914. While military intervention may alleviate the acute symptoms of instability in the short term, it at best fails to address the root social causes of instability, leaving behind the very environment that precipitated instability in the first place – at worst it amplifies and perpetuates instability, as such a “whack-a-mole” strategy tempts perpetual military violence.

“Military strength, however, is not the same as ‘leadership’.” Likewise, American credibility does not contain with it an imperative to always respond to challenges with overwhelming military force – “not making terrible mistakes in foreign policy is another crucial part of credibility.” The collection of policies – including forced-pace democratization, military intervention, and regime change – that continue to be promoted by neoliberal and neoconservative foreign policy elites correspond to gatekeeping to enforce a new standard of civilization, perhaps not a the white man’s burden but the Western burden if you will; they have consistently failed. The militarized and universalist conception of stabilization that has characterized U.S. foreign policy is insufficient at best and counter-productive at worst. “Democracy is not an export commodity” – foreign forces cannot grant self-determination, and democratization is a long-term process not a revolutionary impulse.

Rather than intervention to catalyze forced-pace democratization, then, the stability imperative demands engagement with the fragile states that are the primary source of contemporary instability to catalyze political development and address the fundamental social disorders that drive instability. A comprehensive international development program will account for local conditions to provide tailored, long-term strategies that recognize the existence of multiple modernities and are sensitive to the norms of discrete ecumenical centers to catalyze the development of inclusive and robust institutions and infrastructure. International partners can and should provide monetary

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* Nicaragua (1926), Honduras (1911), Dominican Republic (1916), Mexico (1914), Haiti (1915 and 1994), Belgium (1918 and 1944), Costa Rica (1919), France (1944), Luxembourg (1944), Denmark (1945), Netherlands (1945), Norway (1945), Germany (1945), Japan (1945), Iran (1953), Guatemala (1954), Vietnam (1963), Chile (1973), Grenada (1983), Panama (1990), Afghanistan (2001), Iraq (2003), and Libya (2011) were all military interventions. Alexander B. Downes and Jonathan Monten, “Forced to be Free? Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization,” *International Security* 37, no. 4 (Spring 2013): Appendix A.
and humanitarian aid to mitigate the human security crises that accompany identity-driven conflict, facilitate bodies for dialogue to empower local agency and enable crosscutting social learning, and offer contextually aware governance advisory frameworks to help design inclusive and robust institutions that can foster responsible governance and national legitimacy.

In this era of modernization and democratization, identity-driven conflict is likely to be commonplace. While “regime change may appear to be a low-cost option for powerful democracies such as the United States in the twenty-first century because potential targets are weak states . . . looks can be deceiving. Democracy is unlikely to take root in these places, and the United States may find itself drawn into protracted quagmires.” The processes driving instability in regions consisting of post-colonial fragile states are historical ones inherent to modernizing regions. The implication, however, is not to give war a chance. While there are limits to what global powers can do, and the United States is unlikely to have much control over the trajectory of these regions in the short-term, what global leaders can provide is palliative aid to mitigate the human suffering inherent to national cascades and a comprehensive ameliorative development program to steer the development of these societies from the root toward stability and responsible governance in the long term.79 Long-term development aid is not cheap or easy, but neither is sustained military commitment.

**ACCORD IN A PLURAL SOCIETY**

Rudyard Kipling opened his 1899 poem, *The Ballad of the East and West*, “Oh East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.” Kipling was wrong.80 While always defending against threats, we need to go on the offensive to help create conditions for greater stability, prosperity, and freedom. We must seek out and harness the potential created by dramatic new advances in medical, manufacturing, and agricultural technologies. We must also maximize the power of evolving capacities, such as the prospect of US energy independence facilitated by new extraction technologies. We need to build broad-based partnerships that go far beyond transactional exchanges of political favors for counterterrorism assistance and contributions of coalition troops . . . . We must recognize that our primary task is to identify common interests and then use those to catalyze action by others . . . . We are likely to find ourselves forced to deal with uncomfortable ironies.”
Such pragmatic engagement is inconsistent both with an insular, isolationist grand strategy and a monastic, universalist one whereby Western standards of modernity justify the marginalization of diversity.\textsuperscript{83} So too, however, is it inconsistent with a relativist grand strategy whereby all behaviors are accepted as legitimate – indeed R2P is right to subordinate sovereignty to the ability and willingness of states to protect their civilian population from avoidable catastrophe. But “the opposite of monastic universalism is not relativism, but pluralism. Pluralistic universalism allows us to view the world of IR as a large, overlapping canopy with multiple foundations.”\textsuperscript{84}

If the liberal tradition in IR theory truly is a transposition of domestic order onto the international arena, a global society consisting of multiple models of modernity can indeed be conceived as a plural society. As such, distinct salient identity groups – nation-states and ecumenical constellations – must form crosscutting cleavages to encourage routine interaction, reduce uncertainty and the risk of misperceptions, and foster accord within the plural global society. A plural global society “envisages ‘bridges’ not ‘walls.’”\textsuperscript{85} Such a conception delegitimizes universalism and acknowledges a variety of legitimate institutions and practices. Indeed, ‘no one model . . . embodies all that is efficient and good. Plural and pluralistic civilizations thus act like shock absorbers for a world that is simply too complex to yield to a single . . . logic. Coordination not clash characterize this multicivilizational world.”\textsuperscript{86}

[Indeed, the diffusion of power in the contemporary global structure has yielded a United States that] is too powerful to be challenged by others but not powerful enough to achieve its goals by going it alone. Indeed, popular notions of American unipolarity and hegemony are misleading and potentially dangerous, for the world’s power structure is complex and multilayered. . . . If the United States pursues a heavy-handed, unilateral foreign policy, it will hasten the demise of its preponderance and destroy its ability to shape the global playing field. By binding itself to the outside world through multilateral treaties and agreements . . . the United States may lose some freedom of action – but it gains far more by turning other countries into predictable and cooperative partners.\textsuperscript{87}

Indeed, should we treat rising powers through the lens of adversarial competition, conflict will become path dependent and a self-fulfilling prophecy. After the Cold War, the United States replaced humility with hubris. Now, humility should again replace arrogance. American leaders should listen not preach. “A simple return to
multilateralism would demonstrate that America has once again learned how to use its power wisely.\textsuperscript{88}

Such a pluralist society does not imply relative norms whereby anything goes. Indeed, any society is buttressed by shared norms that guide a behavioral framework to enable the routine interaction and stability that is imperative in the contemporary global structure. Such a framework of norms and regimes represents the bed upon which interactions occur; thus it must express expectations of global behavior that enable the transnational networks and transactions that underpin the world economy and global accord, to include (i) sovereign equality of states; (2) nonintervention in the internal affairs of states; (3) peaceful settlement of disputes between states; (4) abstention from the threat or use of force; (5) fulfillment in good faith of international obligations; (6) cooperation with other states; (7) respect for freedom of navigation and an equitable international economic order; (8) protection of the environment and global commons; and (9) responsibility to protect citizens from avoidable catastrophe and respect for fundamental human rights.\textsuperscript{89}

Such a framework should comprise not a common standard, but a loose sense of shared values entailing often contradictory notions of diversity in a common humanity. This loose sense of shared values [and norms] centers on the material and psychological well-being of all humans. ‘Well being’ and the rights of all ‘humans’ are no longer the prerogative or product of only one [ecumenical] constellation... or political structure or ideology. Instead... human well-being and norms of human rights... have taken on a life of their own and provide the script for all [ecumenical constellations].... All states, polities, and empires claim to serve the well-being of individuals. And all individuals are acknowledged to have inherent rights. The existence of these processes enhances the pluralism that inheres all [ecumenical constellations]. They undercut both the intellectual and political imperialism of imposing one single standard on a diverse world as well as a value relativism that would compel us to accept any and all political practices. These two processes characterize the civilization of modernity that encompasses all major civilizations. They undermine the political capacity to dictate. And they erode the moral basis to abuse.\textsuperscript{90}

Such emphasis on pluralism and an ecumenically differentiated global society can yield “a world into which China and America fit comfortably, [and engagements and encounters reign], as very normal and unexceptional cases.”\textsuperscript{91} Absent a shared set of norms to guide and constrain state behavior to enable routine interaction and crosscutting affiliations, misconceptions among ecumenical constellations “risk building a world of fear and walls in which civilizations are reduced to delivering monologues of
the one right way – yielding not engagements and encounters but clashes” as moralistic crusaders pursue “Toynbee’s Civilization – spelled with a capital C and in the singular.”

Thus, just as it is critical to enforce a foundational normative framework to guide transnational interactions, it is just as critical to resist the temptation to embark upon policies of universalism. Imposing forced-pace democratization in countries that lack robust political institutions encourages strife and instability during an era of rising powers wherein stability is paramount. Rather, it is vital to legitimate the multiple versions of modernity as they exist, allow great powers to regulate their ecumenical constellations, encourage linkages to the broader global society, and enforce a common normative framework of behavior. Forcing a consolidated conception of social power – including homogenous economic systems and universally democratic political structures – worldwide would invite the same tensions between national and global social forces that led to the catastrophic collapse of the system in 1914. In 1962, Deng Xiaopeng allegedly said, “It does not matter whether a cat is black or white. If it catches mice, it is a good cat.” Given the plural, transnational, and power-diffused nature of the contemporary global structure, perhaps that’s not such bad company.
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