One
Crisis of the Old Order

Introduction

One of the great dramas of world politics over the last two hundred years has been the rise of liberal democratic states to global dominance. This liberal ascendancy has involved the extraordinary growth of the Western democracies—from weakness and minority status in the late eighteenth century to wealth and predominance in the late twentieth century. This rise occurred in fits and starts over the course of the modern era. In the nineteenth century, Great Britain was the vanguard of the liberal ascendancy, becoming the leading industrial and naval power of its day. In the twentieth century, the United States was transformed from inwardness and isolation into the dominant world power. During these decades, world wars and geopolitical struggles pitted the liberal democracies against rival autocratic, fascist, and totalitarian great powers. The Cold War was a grand struggle between alternative ideologies of rule and pathways to modern development. With the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the liberal ascendancy reaches a worldwide crescendo. The United States and a far-flung

alliance of liberal democracies stood at the center of world politics—rich, powerful, and dominant.

The Western democracies did not just grow powerful and rich. They also made repeated efforts to build liberal international order—that is, order that is relatively open, rule-based, and progressive. Led by Great Britain and the United States, they championed free trade and took steps to create multilateral rules and institutions of various sorts. Open markets, international institutions, cooperative security, democratic community, progressive change, collective problem solving, shared sovereignty, the rule of law—all are aspects of the liberal vision that have made appearances in various combinations and changing ways over the decades and centuries.

In the decades after World War II, the United States engaged in the most ambitious and far-reaching liberal order building the world had yet seen. It was a distinctive type of liberal international order—a liberal hegemonic order. The United States did not just encourage open and rule-based order. It became the hegemonic organizer and manager of that order. The American political system—and its alliances, technology, currency, and markets—became fused to the wider liberal order. In the shadow of the Cold War, the United States became the "owner and operator" of the liberal capitalist political system—supporting the rules and institutions of liberal internationalism but also enjoying special rights and privileges. It organized and led an extended political system built around multilateral institutions, alliances, strategic partners, and client states. This order is built on strategic understandings and hegemonic bargains. The United States provided "services" to other states through the provision of security and its commitment to stability and open markets.

In the fifty years following World War II, this American-led liberal hegemonic order has been remarkably successful. It provided a stable foundation for decades of Western and global growth and advancement. The United States and its partners negotiated agreements and built mechanisms that reopened the world economy, ushering in a golden era of economic growth. West Germany and Japan were transformed from enemies into strategic partners, ultimately becoming the second- and

third-largest economies in the world. The Western powers also bound themselves together in pacts of mutual restraint and commitment, finding a solution to the centuries-old problem of how Germany, France, and the rest of Europe could exist in peace—the great "quiet revolution" of the twentieth century. In later decades, non-Western countries made transitions to democracy and market economy and integrated into this expanding liberal hegemonic system. The Cold War ended peacefully and on terms favorable to the West. The Western allies were able to both outperform the Soviet system and find ways to signal restraint and accommodation as Soviet leaders made difficult choices to end hostilities with old rivals. By the 1990s, this American-led order was at a zenith. Ideological and geopolitical rivals to American leadership had disappeared. The United States stood at the center of it all as the unipolar power. Its dynamic bundle of oversized capacities, interests, and ideals constituted a remarkable achievement in the unfolding drama of the liberal international project.

In this book, I explore the logic and character of this American liberal hegemonic order. What are its inner workings and moving parts? How can we identify and understand the specific organizational logic of this liberal hegemonic order in the context of earlier efforts to build liberal international order and the wider varieties of global and regional orders? How is it different—if it is—from imperial forms of order? If it is a hierarchical order with liberal characteristics, how do we make sense of its distinctive blend of command and reciprocity, coercion and consent?

Today, the American-led liberal hegemonic order is troubled. Conflicts and controversies have unsettled it. The most obvious crisis of this order unfolded during the George W. Bush administration. Its controversial "war on terror," invasion of Iraq, and skepticism about multilateral rules and agreements triggered a global outpouring of criticism. Anti-Americanism spread and gained strength. Even old and close allies started to question the merits of living in a world dominated by a unipolar America. This sentiment was expressed in a particularly pointed fashion by the then French president Jacques Chirac, who argued that the world must be turned back into a multipolar one because "any

community with only one dominant power is always a dangerous one and provokes reactions."[1]

If the crisis of the old American-led order is reducible to the Bush administration's policies, the crisis may now have passed. The Obama administration has made the restoration of American liberal hegemonic leadership—or what Secretary of State Clinton has called a "multipartner world"—the centerpiece of its foreign policy agenda.[2] But if the crisis was generated by the inherent tensions and insecurities that flow from a unipolar distribution of power, the crisis will surely persist. It may be that a hierarchical order with liberal characteristics is simply not sustainable in a unipolar world—either because others will inevitably resist it or because the hegemon will inevitably become increasingly imperialistic.

Other observers argue that the problems with the American-led order run in a different direction. The crisis of the old is not about American unipolarity; it is about the passing of the American era of dominance. The conflicts and controversies are a struggle by states to shape what comes next, after unipolarity. This great shift is being triggered by a return to multipolarity and the rise of rival global powers with their own order-building agendas.[3] In this view, the 2008 financial crisis and subsequent world economic downturn—the most severe since the Great Depression—was an especially stark demonstration of the pressures on the American-led liberal system. Unlike past postwar economic

[1] See interviews with Chirac by James Graff and Bruce Crumley, "France is not a pacifist country," *Time*, 24 February 2003, 32–33; and James Hoagland, "Chirac's 'Multipolar World.'" *Washington Post*, 4 February 2004, A23.

[2] Signaling a return to America's postwar liberal-oriented leadership, the Obama administration's *National Security Strategy*, asserts that the United States "must pursue a rules-based international system that can advance our own interests by serving mutual interests." Office of the President, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: White House, May 2010).

[3] On anticipations of a return to multipolarity and the end of American dominance, see Charles Kupchan, *The End of the American Era: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Geopolitics of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Knopf, 2003); Parag Khanna, *The Second World: Empires and Influence in the New Global Age* (New York: Random House, 2008); Paul Starobin, *After America: Narratives for the New Global Age* (New York: Penguin Group, 2009); Kishore Mahbubani, *The New Asian Hemisphere: The Irresistible Shift in Global Power to the East* (New York: Public Affairs, 2009); and Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World* (New York: Norton, 2009).

crises, this one had its origins in the United States, and it has served to tarnish the American model of liberal capitalism and raised new doubts about the capacities of the United States to act as the global leader in the provision of economic stability and advancement.[4] With the decline of American unipolarity, we are witnessing the beginning of a struggle over leadership and dominance.

Still other observers accept this view of declining American power and go on to argue that it is liberal international order itself that is ending. The rise of new power centers will come with new agendas for organizing the basic logic and principles of international order. China is the obvious protagonist in this emerging grand drama. Rather than becoming a stakeholder in the existing order, China will use its growing power to push world politics in an illiberal direction.[5] It is the underlying openness and rule-based character of international order that is in transition.

These various claims prompt basic questions about the nature of the troubles that beset the American-led postwar order. Did the Bush administration simply mishandle or mismanage the leadership of the American liberal hegemonic order? Or is the struggle deeper than this, rooted in disagreements over the virtues and liabilities of the American hegemonic organization of liberal international order? Or is it even deeper still, rooted in a breakdown of consensus among leading states—old

[4] For arguments about the impact of the world economic crisis on the American neoliberal model and Washington's leadership capacities, see Joseph Stiglitz, *America, Free Markets, and the Sinking of the World Economy* (New York: Norton, 2010); and J. Bradford Lelong and Stephen S. Cohen, *The End of Influence: What Happens when Other Countries Have the Money* (New York: Basic, 2010). On the growing economic limits on American grand strategy, see Michael Mandelbaum, *The Frugal Superpower: America's Global Leadership in a Cash-Strapped Era* (New York: Public Affairs, 2010); and David P. Calleo, *Follies of Power: America's Unipolar Fantasy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010). On how the financial crisis and world recession have accelerated the rise in influence of China and other non-Western countries, see Mathew J. Burrows and Jennifer Harris, "Revisiting the Future: Geopolitical Effects of the Financial Crisis," *Washington Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (April 2009), 27–38.

[5] See Martin Jacques, *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order* (New York: Penguin, 2009). On the rise of ideological competition in world politics, see Steven Weber and Bruce W. Jentleson, *The End of Arrogance: America in the Global Competition of Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Western states and rising non-Western states—in the virtues of liberal internationalism as a way of organizing international relations?

In this book, I argue that the crisis of the old order transcends controversies generated by recent American foreign policy or even the ongoing economic crisis. It is a crisis of authority *within* the old hegemonic organization of liberal order, *not* a crisis in the deep principles of the order itself. It is a crisis of governance.

This crisis stems from the fact that the underlying foundations of the old order have been transformed. Changes include shifts in power, contested norms of sovereignty, threats related to nonstate actors, and the scope of participating states. America's hegemonic leadership of the liberal international order was made acceptable to other states during the postwar decades because it provided security and other "system services" to a wide range of states. That authority is now less securely established. This does not mean the inevitable end of liberal order. But it does raise a basic challenge for that order: establishing legitimate authority for concerted international action on behalf of the global community, doing so at a time when old relations of authority are eroding.

Although the old American-led hegemonic system is troubled, what is striking about liberal internationalism is its durability. The last decade has brought remarkable upheavals in the global system—the emergence of new powers, financial crises, a global recession, and bitter disputes among allies over American unipolar ambitions. Despite these upheavals, liberal international order as an organizational logic of world politics has proven resilient. It is still in demand. Appealing alternatives to an open and rule-based order simply have not crystallized. On the contrary, the rise of non-Western powers and the growth of economic and security interdependence are creating new constituencies and pressures for liberal international order.

Ironically, the old order has, in some ways, been the victim of its own success. It successfully defeated the threat—Communist expansionism—that, in part, drove its creation. It succeeded in creating a relatively open and robust system of trade and investment. The demise of the Soviet Union has reduced the importance of American military

guarantees in Western Europe and East Asia. Economic growth in countries like China and India has created new centers of global power. These and other developments have led to profound questions about the American-centered nature of the old order. That has led not to a rejection per se of liberal order but to a call to renegotiate authority among the United States and other key stakeholders. In short, we need a new bargain, not a new system. And if this constitutes a crisis of authority, it is worth remembering that liberal international order has encountered crises in the past and evolved as a result. I believe it will again.

There are four central claims in this book. First, a distinctive type of international order was constructed after World War II. At its core, it was a hierarchical order with liberal characteristics. America played the leading role in the provision of rule and stability in that order. It was a hierarchical system that was built on both American power dominance and liberal principles of governance. The United States was the dominant state, but its power advantages were muted and mediated by an array of postwar rules, institutions, and reciprocal political processes—backed up by shared strategic interests and political bargains. Weaker and secondary states were given institutionalized access to the exercise of American power. The United States provided public goods and operated within a loose system of multilateral rules and institutions. American hegemonic power and liberal international order were fused—indeed they each were dependent on the other. But the strategic bargains and institutional foundations of this liberal hegemonic order have eroded, and as a result, the authority with which the United States has wielded power in this system has also diminished.

Second, there are deep sources for this authority crisis, rooted in the transformation of the Westphalian organization of the state system. The rise of American unipolarity and the erosion of norms of state sovereignty—along with other deep shifts in the global system—have eroded the foundations of the old order and thrown the basic terms of order and rule of world politics into dispute. In a bipolar or multipolar system, powerful states "rule" in the process of leading a coalition of states to balance against other states. When the system shifts to unipolarity,

this logic of rule disappears. Rule is no longer based on leadership of a balancing coalition or on the resulting equilibrium of power but on the predominance of one state. This is new and different—and potentially threatening to weaker and secondary states. As a result, the power of the leading state is thrown into the full light of day.

The end of the Cold War ushered in a world system characterized by unipolarity and globalization. Relations between poles and peripheries shifted. During the Cold War, the liberal order was built primarily within the Western advanced industrial world. It existed within one half of the larger bipolar global system. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of bipolarity, the "inside" Western system became the "outside" order. This large-scale expansion of the liberal order set new players and issues into motion. More recently, the rise of new security threats has brought into question the logic of alliance and security partnerships. After September 11, 2001, America showed itself to be not the satisfied protector of the old order but a threatened and insecure power that resisted the bargains and restraints of its own postwar order. As a result, in the decades of the new century, the character of rule in world politics has been thrown into question.

Third, to understand the nature of this crisis and the future of liberal international order, we need to understand the types of international order—and the sources of rule and authority, power, and legitimacy within them. In the first instance, this means identifying the various logics of liberal order and the ways in which sovereignty, rules, and hierarchy can be arrayed. Our most invoked theories of world politics begin with the assumption that the global system is anarchical—organized around the diffusion and decentralization of power among competing sovereign states. In other words, our theories tend to focus on the "logic of anarchy." But in a global system in which one state is so powerful and a balancing or equilibrium of power does not obtain, it is necessary to understand the logic of relations between superordinate and subordinate states. We need, in effect, to illuminate the "logic of hierarchy" that operates within the system.

I offer a basic distinction between imperial and liberal hegemonic forms of hierarchy. After this, I explore the ways in which shifts from

bipolarity to unipolarity alter the incentives and forms in which leading states make institutional bargains and agree to operate within rule-based order. The rise of unipolarity has altered—and to some extent diminished—the incentives that the United States has to bind itself to global rules and institutions. But it has not negated those incentives. To the extent that the United States sees that its unipolar position of power is or will wane, the incentives to renegotiate postwar hegemonic bargains actually increase.

Fourth, the liberal ascendancy is not over. It is evolving and there are multiple pathways of change. There are pressures for the reallocation of authority and leadership within the system. But there are also constituencies that support a continued—if renegotiated—American hegemonic role. Various features of the contemporary global system reinforce the continuity of liberal international order. The disappearance of great-power war removes a classic mechanism for the overturning of order. The growth and sheer geopolitical heft of the world's liberal democracies creates a certain stability to the existing order. Moreover, liberal international order—hegemonic or otherwise—tends to be unusually integrative. It is an order that is easy to join and hard to overturn. Countries such as China and Russia are not fully embedded in the liberal international order, but they nonetheless profit from its existence. These states may not soon or ever fully transform into liberal states, but the expansive and integrative logic of liberal international order creates incentives for them to do so—and it forecloses opportunities to create alternative global orders.

In the end, it is the United States itself that will be critical in shaping the evolving character of liberal internationalism. If the United States wants to remain the leading purveyor of global order, it will need to rediscover and adapt its old strategy of liberal order building.[6] The United

[6] This book does not offer a general theory of the domestic sources of American grand strategy. The argument is cast in terms of government choices about the organization of international order in the context of perceived interests, opportunities, incentives, and constraints. A variety of doctrines, ideologies, and strategic visions compete for influence among foreign policy elites. The influence of these competing doctrines, ideologies, and visions is determined—at least, over the long term—by their responsiveness to these interests, opportunities, incentives, and constraints. National political identity and traditions and considerations of

States will need to renegotiate its relationship with the rest of the world and this will inevitably mean giving up some of the rights and privileges that it has had in the earlier hegemonic era. In the twentieth century, the United States became a "liberal Leviathan." Indeed, American global authority was built on Hobbesian grounds—that is, other countries, particularly in Western Europe and later in East Asia, handed the reigns of power to Washington, just as Hobbes's individuals in the state of nature voluntarily construct and hand over power to the Leviathan. Today, amidst long-term transformations in power and interdependence, there is a widespread view that no one elected the United States to its position of privilege—or at least that only the Europeans and Japanese did, and other states that are now rising in power did not. The reestablishment of the United States as a liberal Leviathan involves the voluntary granting of that status by other states. For this to happen, the United States again needs to search for and champion practical and consensual functioning global rules and institutions. In the twenty-first century, this will involve sharing authority among a wider coalition of liberal democratic states, advanced and developing, rising and declining, Western and non-Western. It is this liberal complex of states that is the ultimate guardian of the rules, institutions, and progressive purposes of the liberal order.

In this chapter, I introduce the questions and debates that are explored in this book. I first look at the enduring problem of international order. Next, I look at the rise and transformation of liberal international order. After this, I look at the logic of hierarchical political order and its imperial and liberal variants. I then follow with a road map for the chapters that follow.

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political legitimacy are aspects of this decision environment. In this sense, elites respond both to the logic of consequences and the logic of appropriateness. For discussions of the complementarity of these logics, see Elinor Ostrom, "Rational Choice Theory and Institutional Analysis: Toward Complementarity," *American Political Science Review* 85, no. 1 (March 1991), 237–43; Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (Autumn 1998), 887–917; and Thomas Risse, "Constructivism and International Institutions: Toward Conversations across Paradigms," in Helen Milner and Ira Katznelson, eds., *Political Science: The State of the Discipline* (New York: Norton, 2002), 597–623.

The Rise and Fall of International Order

Over the centuries, world politics has been marked by repeated historical dramas of order creation and destruction. International order has risen and fallen, come and gone. At periodic moments, leading states have found themselves seeking to create and maintain rules and institutions of order. The most basic questions about world politics are on the table: who commands and who benefits? The struggle over order has tended to be, first and foremost, a struggle over how leading states can best provide security for themselves. It is a search for a stable peace. But states engaged in order building have also gone beyond this and attempted to establish a wider array of political and economic rules and principles of order. They have sought to create a congenial environment in which to pursue their interests. Along the way, the rights, roles, and authority relations that define the system are established. In all these ways, struggles over international order are moments when states grapple over the terms by which the global system will be governed, if it is to be governed at all.

We can look more closely at these underlying questions about international order. What is international order? How has it been created and destroyed? And how has it varied in terms of its logic and character?

In every era, great powers have risen up to build rules and institutions of relations between states, only to see those ordering arrangements eventually break down or transform. In the past, the restructuring of the international system has tended to occur after major wars. "At the end of every war since the end of the eighteenth century," as F. H. Hinsley notes, "the leading states made a concerted effort, each one more radical than the last, to reconstruct the system on lines that would enable them, or so they believed, to avoid a further war."[7] The violence of great-power war tears apart the old order. The war itself strips the rules and arrangements of the prewar system of its last shreds of legitimacy. Indeed, great-power war is perhaps the ultimate sign that an international order has

[7] F. H. Hinsley, "The Rise and Fall of the Modern International System," *Review of International Studies* (January 1982), 4.

failed. Revisionist states seek to overturn it through aggression, while status quo states cannot defend it short of war. And in the aftermath of war, victors are empowered to organize a new system with rules and arrangements that accord with their interests. Armistice agreements and peace conferences provide opportunities to lay down new rules and principles of international order.[8]

In this way, the settlements of great-power conflicts have become ordering moments when the rules and institutions of the international order are on the table for negotiation and change. The major powers are forced to grapple with and come to agreement on the general principles and arrangements of international order. These ordering moments not only ratify the outcome of the war, they also lay out common understandings, rules and expectations, and procedures for conflict resolution. They play a sort of constitutional function, providing a framework in which the subsequent flow of international relations takes place.[9]

International order is manifest in the settled rules and arrangements between states that define and guide their interaction.[10] War and upheaval

[8] On the politics and ideas of order building after major wars, see G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001); Kalevi J. Holsti, *Peace and War: Armed Conflicts and International Orders, 1648–1989* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Andreas Osiander, *The States System of Europe, 1640–1990: Peacemaking and the Conditions of International Stability* (London: Oxford University Press, 1994); and Jeff Legro, *Rethinking the World: Great Power Strategies and International Order* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007).

[9] On the notion of postwar settlements as "constitutional" moments of order building, see Ikenberry, "Constitutional Politics in International Relations, *European Journal of International Relations* 4, no. 2 (June 1998), 147–77; and Daniel Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001). More generally, international legal scholars have explored the constitution-like features of the post-1945 international system of rights, laws, and institutions. See Jeffrey L. Dunoff and Joel P. Trachtman, eds., *Ruling the World? Constitutionalism, International Law, and Global Governance* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[10] In his classic study, Hedley Bull distinguished between world order and international order. World order is composed of all peoples and the totality of relations between them, and international order is composed of the rules and settled expectations between states. See Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1977). For extensions and refinements of these ideas, see Barry Buzan, *From International to World Society: English School Theory and the Social Structure of Globalization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and Andrew Hurrell, *On Global Order: Power, Values, and the Constitution of International Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

between states—that is, disorder—is turned into order when stable rules and arrangements are established by agreement, imposition, or otherwise. Order exists in the patterned relations between states. States operate according to a set of organizational principles that define roles and the terms of their interaction.[11] International order breaks down or enters into crisis when the settled rules and arrangements are thrown into dispute or when the forces that perpetuate order no longer operate.

International orders can be distinguished and compared in many ways. Some international orders are regional, others global. Some are highly institutionalized, others not. Some are hierarchical. The distribution of power in international orders can also vary. Power can be centralized or decentralized. Order can be organized around various "poles" of power—multipolar, bipolar, or unipolar.[12] The challenge for scholars is to use these various features or dimensions to capture the alternative logics and characteristics of international order.

At the outset, it is useful to characterize and compare types of international order in terms of the ways in which stable order is maintained. Generally speaking, international order can be established and rendered stable in one of three ways: through balance, command, or consent. Each involves a different mechanism—or logic—for the establishment and maintenance of order.[13] In different times and places, international

[11] International order in this sense involved shared and stable expectations among states about how they will interact with each other, or as Janice Mattern suggests, it is a "relationship among specific states that produces and reinforces shared understandings of expectations and behaviors with respect to each other." Mattern, *Ordering International Politics: Identity, Crisis, and Representational Force* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 30.

[12] In the chapters to follow, I will be referring to each of these ways of characterizing and comparing international orders. On regional and global systems of order, see Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Power: The Structure of International Security* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Peter Katzenstein, *A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005). On variations in the institutionalization of international order, see Stephen Krasner, ed., *International Regime* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982). On variations in hierarchy, see David Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009). On variations in polarity and the distribution of power, see Edward D. Mansfield, "Concentration, Polarity, and the Distribution of Power," *International Studies Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (March 1993), 105–28; and Barry Buzan, *The United States and the Great Powers* (London: Polity, 2004), chap. 3.

[13] See Ikenberry, *After Victory*, chap. 2.

order has been organized around each of these mechanisms or by a combination of these mechanisms. As we shall see, the American-led liberal hegemonic order has relied in important ways on all three.

In an international order based on balance, order is maintained through an equilibrium of power among the major states. No one state dominates or controls the system. Order emerges from a power stalemate. States amass power, build alliances, and maneuver to prevent a strong and threatening state from establishing dominance. The specific ways in which balance can be achieved can vary widely.[14] Through this ongoing balancing process, international order is rendered stable. Order based on a balance of power was manifest in Europe in the eighteenth century, and as a concert of powers in Europe after 1815; during the Cold War, international order took the shape of a bipolar balance-of-power system. But in each of these historical eras, order was established through the presence of an equilibrium of power among major states. Leading states or coalitions of states formed counterbalancing poles that checked and restrained each other.

In an order based on command, a powerful state organizes and enforces order. Order is hierarchical and maintained through the dominance of the leading state. States are integrated vertically in superordinate and subordinate positions. Command-based order can vary widely in terms of the degree to which the hierarchical terms of order are enforced through coercion or are also moderated by elements of autonomy, bargaining, and reciprocity. The great empires of the ancient and modern world were hierarchical orders, manifesting various strategies of rule and "repertories of imperial power."[15] The British and American-led

[14] A rich literature exists on the theory and practice of the balance of power. For surveys, see Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths and Models* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Stuart J. Kaufman, Richard Little, and William C. Wohlforth, eds., *The Balance of Power in World History* (New York: Palgrave, 2007); Jonathan Haslam, *No Virtue Like Necessity: Realist Thought in International Relations since Machiavelli* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), chap. 2; and Daniel H. Nexon, "The Balance of Power in the Balance," *World Politics* 61, no. 2 (April 2009), 330–59.

[15] Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), chap. 1.

international orders were also hierarchical—each, as we shall see, with a distinct mix of imperial and liberal characteristics.

Finally, order based on consent is organized around agreed-upon rules and institutions that allocate rights and limits on the exercise of power. Frameworks of rules and arrangements are constructed that provide authoritative arrangements for international relations. State power is not extinguished in a consent-based order, but it is circumscribed by agreed-upon rules and institutions. Disparities of power between states may still matter in the structuring of consensual, rule-based order, but the rules and institutions nonetheless reflect reciprocal and negotiated agreements between states. The British and American-led liberal orders have been built in critical respects around consent. The contemporary European Union is also a political order of this sort.

In these various ways, states have grappled with the fundamental problem of creating order in a world of sovereign and interdependent states. The resulting international orders have differed in terms of the ways in which power, authority, and institutions have been arrayed. In some cases, international order has been maintained in the most minimalist of terms, through a decentralized balance of power. In other cases, a dominant state has created order through coercive domination of weaker states and peoples. In still other instances, leading states have sought to build ambitious systems of institutionalized political and economic cooperation. It is in this general historical-theoretical context that we can situate and explore the character and logic of liberal international order.

Liberal International Order

Over the last two hundred years, international order has been profoundly influenced by the rise of liberal democratic states. This liberal ascendancy has been manifest in the rise in the power, influence, and global reach of liberal great powers—and in the international order that they have built. Through the Victorian era and into the twentieth

century, the fortunes of liberal democratic states flourished—and with the growth and expansion of this liberal core of states and its organizing principles, world politics increasingly took a liberal internationalist cast. This liberal ascendancy took a dramatic jump forward in the hands of the United States after World War II, when the United States built postwar order within the Western world—and extending outward—on liberal ideas and principles.[16]

The liberal ascendancy has moved through two great historical eras dominated, respectively, by Great Britain and the United States. Each emerged as the leading power of its day and pushed and pulled other states in a liberal direction, looking after the overall stability and openness of the system. In the nineteenth century, Great Britain led in giving shape to an international order marked by great power, imperial, and liberal arrangements. In the decades following the Napoleonic war, the major states of Europe agreed on a set of rules and expectations that guided great-power relations. Great Britain and the other major states also pursued empire in Africa, Asia, and other parts of the world. At the same time, Great Britain—beginning with its famous repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846—oversaw the expansion of a global system of commerce organized around open trade, the gold standard, and freedom of the seas.[17]

[16] In depicting the liberal ascendancy, Daniel Deudney writes: "For most of history, republics were confined to small city-states where they were insecure and vulnerable to conquest and internal usurpation, but over the last two centuries they have expanded to continental size through federal union and emerged victorious from the violent total conflicts of the twentieth century." Deudney, *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory from the Polis to the Global Village* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 2. William McNeill observes that the rise of the modern liberal West was propelled by twin revolutions beginning in the late eighteenth century: the industrial and democratic revolutions. "Taken together, the result was to raise the power and wealth of the Western style of life so far above those familiar to other civilizations as to make resistance to Western encroachment no longer possible." William H. McNeill, *A World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 411.

[17] It is important not to exaggerate nineteenth-century British liberal internationalism. The British orientation toward international order was both liberal and illiberal. It was liberal in its support for global free trade, although even this commitment coexisted with imperial preferences. The British empire—which encompassed almost half the world—was decidedly illiberal, being composed of colonies and other dependencies, none of which were democracies or run liberally. As Gary Bass observes, there was a "monstrous disconnect between the growing liberalism in Britain and the brute authoritarianism in the British Empire." Nonetheless, in

In the twentieth century, liberal order building became more explicit and ambitious. At different moments over these decades, the United States made efforts to create or expand the architecture of an open and rule-based order. Woodrow Wilson brought a vision of a liberal world order to the post-World War I settlement, anchored in the proposal for a League of Nations, although it failed to take hold. When the United States found itself again in a position to build international order in the 1940s, Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman extended and ultimately reinvented the liberal international project. During the postwar decades, this order itself evolved as the United States and the other Western liberal states waged the Cold War, modernized their societies, and rebuilt and expanded economic and security relations across the democratic capitalist world. After the Cold War, America's international liberal project evolved yet again. The bipolar world order gave way to a global system dominated by the Western capitalist states. If liberal order was built after World War II primarily within the West, the end of the Cold War turned that order into a sprawling global system. States in all the regions of the world made democratic transitions and pursued market strategies of economic development. Trade and investment expanded across the international system.[18]

This spread of liberal democracy and adaptation and extension of liberal international order took place amidst war and economic upheaval. At each turn, nonliberal states offered alternative models of

his study of British and European nineteenth-century humanitarian interventions, Bass does find liberal impulses behind British military operations to stop atrocities in troubled areas such as Greece, Syria, and Bulgaria. Bass, *Freedom's Battle: The Origins of Humanitarian Intervention* (New York: Random House, 2008), quote at 343–44.

[18] For explorations of the rise and spread of Anglo-American liberal internationalism, see Mark R. Brawley, *Liberal Leadership: Great Powers and Their Challengers in Peace and War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993); Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); Michael Mandelbaum, *The Ideas that Conquered the World: Peace, Democracy, and Free Markets in the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Public Affairs, 2002); Walter Russell Mead, *God and Gold: Britain, America, and the Making of the Modern World* (New York: Knopf, 2007); and David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

socioeconomic development and rival ways of ordering international politics. In the 1930s and into the Cold War era, geopolitics was not just a struggle for power but a contest between alternative pathways to modernity. Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany embodied the authoritarian capitalist alternative. The Soviet Union embodied the state socialist pathway. World politics was, in a profound sense, a competition between these alternatives. Success was defined in terms of the ability to generate power and wealth, build coalitions and alliances, and overcome geopolitical challengers. With the defeat of the Axis states in World War II, the "great contest" shifted to a struggle between communism (or state socialism) and liberal capitalism.[19]

Following from this, it is possible to make several general observations about the rise of liberal states and liberal order building.

First, liberal international order can be seen as a distinctive type of international order. As noted earlier, liberal international order is defined as order that is open and loosely rule-based. Openness is manifest when states trade and exchange on the basis of mutual gain. Rules and institutions operate as mechanisms of governance—and they are at least partially autonomous from the exercise of state power. In its ideal form, liberal international order creates a foundation in which states can engage in reciprocity and institutionalized cooperation. As such, liberal international order can be contrasted with closed and non-rule-based relations—whether geopolitical blocs, exclusive regional spheres, or closed imperial systems.[20]

In ideal form, liberal international order is sustained through consent rather than balance or command. States voluntarily join the order and operate within it according to mutually agreed-upon rules and arrangements. The rule of law, rather than crude power politics, is the framework

[19] For a depiction of this "great contest" that emphasizes the contingent character of the Western liberal triumph, see Azar Gat, *Victorious and Vulnerable: Why Democracy Won in the 20th Century and How It Is Still Imperiled* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010).

[20] For a survey of types of international orders, including nonliberal varieties, see essays in Greg Fry and Jocinta O'Hagan, eds., *Contending Images of World Politics* (New York: St. Martin's/Macmillan, 2000).

of interstate relations. But of course, the real-world liberal international political formations have been more complex orders where power balance and hierarchy intervene in various ways to shape and constrain relations.

Second, the more specific features of liberal international order vary widely. The liberal vision is wide ranging, and the ideas associated with liberal internationalism have evolved over the last two centuries. In the nineteenth century, liberal international order was understood primarily as a commitment to open trade, the gold standard, and great power accommodation. In the twentieth century, it has been understood to entail more elaborate forms of rules and institutional cooperation. Notions of cooperative security, democratic community, collective problem solving, universal rights, and shared sovereignty have also evolved over the last century to inform the agenda of liberal order building.

Generally speaking, liberal international order in the twentieth century has traveled through two phases—marked by the two world wars. After World War I, Woodrow Wilson and other liberals pushed for an international order organized around a global collective security body in which sovereign states would act together to uphold a system of territorial peace. Open trade, national self-determination, and a belief in progressive global change also undergirded the Wilsonian worldview—a "one world" vision of nation-states that trade and interact in a multilateral system of laws creating an orderly international community. "What we seek," Wilson declared at Mount Vernon on July 4, 1918, "is the reign of law, based on the consent of the governed and sustained by the organized opinion of mankind." Despite its great ambition, the Wilsonian plan for liberal international order entailed very little in the way of institutional machinery or formal great-power management of the system. It was a "thin" liberal order in which states would primarily act cooperatively through the shared embrace of liberal ideas and principles.[21] In the end, this experiment

[21] See Thomas Knock, *To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Lloyd E. Ambrosius, *Wilsonianism: Woodrow Wilson and His Legacy in American Foreign Relations* (New York: Palgrave, 2002); and John Milton Cooper, Jr., *Breaking the Heart of the World: Woodrow Wilson and the Fight for the League of Nations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

in liberal order building failed, and the world soon entered an interwar period of closed economic systems and rival imperial blocs.

When the Roosevelt administration found itself in a position to shape the global system after World War II, it initially sought to pursue order building along Wilsonian lines. It embraced the vision of an open trading system and a world organization in which the great powers would cooperate to keep the peace. Beyond this, American architects of postwar order—drawing lessons from the Wilsonian failure and incorporating ideas from the New Deal period—also advanced more ambitious ideas about economic and political cooperation embodied in the Bretton Woods institutions. But the weakness of postwar Europe and rising tensions with the Soviet Union pushed liberal order building toward a much more American-led and Western-centered system. As the Cold War unfolded, the United States took command of organizing and running the system. In both the security and economic realms, the United States found itself taking on new commitments and functional roles. Its own economic and political system became, in effect, the central component of the larger liberal hegemonic order.

In these instances, we can distinguish various features of liberal international order. Liberal order can be relatively flat, as it was envisaged by Wilson after 1919, or built around institutionalized hierarchical relations, as it eventually came to be after 1945. Liberal international order can be universal in scope or operate as a regional or an exclusive grouping. It can be constructed between Western democracies or within the wider global system. Liberal international order can affirm and embody principles of state sovereignty and national-self-determination or champion more supranational forms of shared sovereignty. It can be highly institutionalized with formal legal rules, or it can operate with more informally structured expectations and commitments. Liberal international order can be narrowly drawn as a security order—as the League of Nations was on collective security—or developed as a more ambitious system of cooperative security and shared rights and obligations.[22]

[22] These various dimensions of liberal order are explored in G. John Ikenberry, "Liberal Internationalism 3.0: America and the Dilemmas of Liberal World Order," *Perspectives on Politics* 7, no. 1 (March 2009), 71–87.

Third, liberal international order—and the successive waves of liberal order building—has been built upon the modern states system and evolving frameworks for managing great power relations. That is, liberal order, in each of its nineteenth- and twentieth-century formations, has been built on realist foundations. This is true in two respects. Most generally, over the last two centuries, the construction of open and rule-based relations has been pursued by liberal great powers as they operated in the wider system of states. At a deep or foundational level in the modern era, the Westphalian system of states has prevailed, defined in terms of the multipolar or bipolar organization of great powers and shared norms of state sovereignty. It has been leading states, operating within this system of states, that have pursued liberal order building.

Over the last two centuries, the great powers within this Westphalian system have evolved principles and practices to manage and stabilize their relations. Beginning in 1815, successful settlements were increasingly understood to be based on a set of principles of restraint and accommodation. Embodying this "society of states" approach to international order, the Vienna settlement integrated the defeated French, recognized legitimate French national and security interests, and put in place a diplomatic process for resolving emerging problems on the basis of shared principles and understandings.[23] The resulting Concert of Europe is widely seen as a model of a stable and successful international order. The failure of the Versailles settlement in 1919 to embody these restraint and accommodation principles is widely seen as a critical source of the instability and war that followed. In contrast, in the settlement of World War II, the United States undertook the comprehensive reconstruction of Germany and Japan as liberal democratic states and their integration into the postwar American-led liberal international order—incorporating principles and practices of great-power restraint and accommodation brought forward from earlier eras of order building within the Westphalian system.[24]

[23] On the society-of-states approach to international order, see Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society*. A more detailed survey of these ideas is presented in chapter 2.

[24] For a discussion of principles of great-power restraint and accommodation as they were manifest in the Cold War settlement, see Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "The Unraveling of the Cold War Settlement," *Survival* (December/January 2009–10).

Taken together, we can see several distinct eras of liberal order building, and across these eras we can trace evolving ideas and practices of liberal international order. The American-led liberal hegemonic order is only one type of liberal order. Liberal international order itself has been pursued on the foundation of a state system in which the great powers have evolved principles and practices of restraint and conflict management. These various "waves" and "layers" of international order coexist within the contemporary global system.

Imperial and Liberal Rule

The United States emerged in the mid-twentieth century as the world's most powerful state. It had the power not just to pursue its interests but to shape its global environment. It made strategic choices, deployed power, built institutions, forged partnerships, and produced a sprawling order. It was an order with many parts, features, and layers—global, regional, economic, political, military, social, and ideological. But together, the parts constituted a political formation—that is, a more or less coherent political order with a distinct logic and character. As Charles Maier argues, the American order—much like empires and other political orders of the past—has had a distinctive set of characteristics or "institutional markers."[25]

But what sort of order was it? If the American postwar order has been a mix of command and consent, what is the nature of this mix and how has it changed over time? Is the American political formation an empire, or do its liberal features give it a shape and organization that is distinct from the great empires of the past? Put simply, has the United States been engaged in imperial rule or liberal rule?

The empire debate is an old one—shadowing the rise of American power itself. In the early postwar years, in the 1960s, and again in the

[25] Charles Maier, *Among Empires: American Ascendancy and Its Predecessors* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

post–Cold War decades, scholars and commentators have debated the character of American domination, arguing about whether it is a modern form of empire.[26] The British writer and labor politician Harold Laski evoked a looming American empire in 1947 when he said that "America bestrides the world like a colossus; neither Rome at the height of its power nor Great Britain in the period of economic supremacy enjoyed an influence so direct, so profound, or so pervasive."[27] Later, during the Vietnam War, critics and revisionist historians traced what was seen as a deep-rooted impulse toward militarism and empire through the history of American foreign policy. Some writers saw the underlying motive for empire as essentially economic, tracing this impulse back to the Open Door policy of the turn of the nineteenth century.[28] Others saw imperial ambition rooted in a logic of security and geopolitical control, given impetus by the Cold War. As one prominent critic of American foreign policy argued during this period: "Since 1945 this country, not content with being *primus inter pares* among the nations, has sought not the delicate balance of power but a position of commanding superiority in weapons technology, in the regulation of the international economy, and in the manipulation of the internal politics of other countries."[29]

In recent years, the empire debate has returned, focusing on America's global ambitions under conditions of unipolarity. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, geopolitical rivals to the United States all but disappeared. Yet, a half century after their occupation, the United States still provides security for Japan and Germany—until recently, the world's second- and third-largest economies. American military bases and carrier battle groups project power into all corners of the world—and

[26] For surveys of these waves of empire debate, see Michael Cox, "Empire in Denial? Debating U.S. Power," *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 2 (2004), 228–36; and Cox, "The Empire's Back in Town—Or America's Imperial Temptation—Again," *Millennium* 32, no. 1 (2003), 1–27.

[27] Harold Laski., quoted in Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 68.

[28] See the works by William Appleman Williams, especially *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: Norton, 1959).

[29] Richard Barnet, *Intervention and Revolution: America's Confrontation with Insurgent Movements Around the World* (New York: World Publishing, 1968), 25.

indeed the United States possesses a near monopoly on the use of force internationally. Upon this unipolar foundation, the Bush administration came to power and, after the attacks of September 11, 2001, pursued a "war on terror," invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, expanded the military budget, and put forward a controversial 2002 National Security Strategy articulating a doctrine of military preemption in the face of self-defined threats. American power was once again thrust into the light of day—and it deeply unsettled much of the world. Not surprisingly, the concept of empire was invoked again to describe America's global ambitions and exercise of power in a one-superpower world.[30]

But is the American political formation—in the postwar decades or more recently—really an empire? The term "empire" refers to the political control by a dominant state of the domestic and foreign policies of weaker peoples or polities. The European colonial empires of the late nineteenth century were the most direct, formal kind. The Soviet "sphere of influence" in Eastern Europe entailed an equally coercive but less direct form of control. The British Empire included both direct colonial rule and informal empire. If empire is defined loosely, as a hierarchical system of political relationships in which the most powerful state exercises decisive influence, then the American-led order indeed qualifies.

What the American postwar political formation shares with empires is that it is an order organized, at least loosely, around hierarchical relations of domination and subordination. But the American postwar order is multifaceted. The most salient aspect of American domination in the

[30] The historian Niall Ferguson captured this widely held view, noting that "the British Empire is the most commonly cited precedent for the global power currently wielded by the United States. America is heir to the Empire in both senses: offspring in the colonial era, successor today." Ferguson, *Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), xii. For surveys of the large and growing list of books and essays on the United States as global empire, see G. John Ikenberry, "The Illusions of Empire," *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 2 (March/April 2004), 144–54; Alexander J. Motyl, "Is Empire Everything? Is Everything Empire?" *Comparative Politics* 39 (2006), 229–49; and Charles S. Maier, "Empire Without End: Imperial Achievements and Ideologies," *Foreign Affairs* 89, no. 4 (July/August 2010), 153–59.

postwar era is its mixed character. The United States built hierarchical relations but also mutually agreed-upon rules and institutions. There are both command-based and consent-based logics embedded in the postwar American-led order. The more general point is that hierarchical systems of domination and subordination can vary widely in their logic and character. Hierarchical political orders can have imperial characteristics, or they can have liberal characteristics—or they can be a mix.[31] Thus, it is useful to think of hierarchical political orders as existing on a continuum between imperial and liberal hegemonic ideal types.[32]

Empires are hierarchical political systems in which the dominant state exercises direct or indirect sovereign control over the decisions of subordinate states. "Empire," as Napoleon's foreign minister, Charles Maurice de Talleyrand, said, is "the art of putting men in their place." Political control is extensive. The imperial state asserts control over both the internal and external policies of subordinate states—or at least it maintains the right to do so. At the same time, the imperial state imposes the rules of hierarchical order but is itself not bound by those rules. In an empire, the dominating state has the final say over the terms of the relationship—its control may be disguised and obscured, but it has ultimate and sovereign control over the subordinate units within the order. Historically, imperial systems have been manifest in a wide variety of ways, ranging from direct colonial rule to looser types of informal empire.[33]

[31] In efforts to capture the distinctive blend of liberal and imperial features of America's postwar political formation, scholars have used terms such as "empire by invitation," "consensual hegemony," "empire by consent," and "empire of trust." These terms have been invoked, respectively, by Geir Lundstadt, *The American "Empire"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); Charles S. Maier, "Alliance and Autonomy: European Identity and U.S. Foreign Policy Objectives in the Truman Years," in Michael Lacey, ed., *The Truman Presidency* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Thomas F. Madden, *Empires of Trust: How Rome Built—and America Is Building—a New World* (London: Plume, 2009).

[32] See David Lake, *Entangling Relations: American Foreign Policy in Its Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); and Lake, "Anarchy, Hierarchy and the Variety of International Relations," *International Organization* 50, no. 1 (1996), 1–35.

[33] The literature on empire is vast. For studies of the logic of empire, see Michael Doyle, *Empires* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984); and Herfried Munkler, *Empires: The*

In contrast, liberal hegemony is hierarchical order built around political bargains, diffuse reciprocity, provision of public goods, and mutually agreeable institutions and working relationships. The liberal hegemonic state asserts more limited control over subordinate states, primarily directed at shaping the terms of their external policies. The liberal hegemonic state dominates the order by establishing and maintaining its rules and institutions—but in doing so, it operates to a greater or lesser extent within those rules and institutions. The liberal hegemonic state establishes its rule within the order by shaping the milieu in which other states operate.

In the case of the American postwar order, as we shall see, there are several features that—at least in its ideal form—give it a more consensual and agreed-upon character than imperial systems. One is the sponsorship and support of a loose system of rules and institutions that it has itself operated within. Another is its leadership in the provision of public goods—including security and maintenance of an open economic system. As an open system organized around leading liberal democratic states, states that operated within it have opportunities to consult, bargain, and negotiate with the United States. In effect, subordinate states have access to decision making at the center. Institutions for joint or concerted leadership span the liberal hegemonic landscape. These features of the American-led order do not eliminate hierarchy or the exercise of power, but they mute the imperial form of hierarchy and infuse it with liberal characteristics.

To be sure, variations in hierarchy exist across the various regional realms of American domination. Liberal characteristics of hegemonic order are most extensive within the advanced liberal democratic world, particularly in U.S. relations with Western Europe and Japan. In other parts of East Asia and across the developing world, American-led order

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Logic of World Domination from Ancient Rome to the United States (London: Polity, 2007). For recent comprehensive histories, see John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Global History of Empire Since 1405* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008); and Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires and the Politics of Difference in World History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

is hierarchical but with much fainter liberal characteristics.[34] While American hegemony within the Western world tends to be organized around agreed-upon multilateral rules and institutions, American hegemony in East Asia is organized around a "hub-and-spoke" security system of client states. In some parts of the developing world—including in Latin America and the Middle East—American involvement has often been crudely imperial.[35]

If this liberal hegemonic order is in crisis, can the bargains and institutions that support it be renegotiated and reestablished? This is in part a question about American willingness and capacity to continue to operate within a liberal hegemonic framework—providing public goods, supporting and abiding by agreed-upon rules and institutions, and adjusting policies within an ongoing system of political bargaining and reciprocity. It is also a question of the interests and ambitions of other established and rising states in the system. Was the American liberal hegemonic order a historical artifact of the long postwar era, now breaking down and giving way to a different type of international order? Or can it be reorganized and renegotiated for the next era of world politics?

Plan for the Book

This book explores the long "arc" of the American liberal order-building experience—its origins, logic, growth, crisis, and coming transformation.

[34] For an important exploration of regional variations within the American "imperium," see Katzenstein, *A World of Regions*. Katzenstein argues that the character of Europe and East Asia as regions has been influenced by America as a global geopolitical presence. In particular, the intermediary role of Germany and Japan as supporters of United States power and purpose have shaped in complex and divergent ways the institutions and political organizations of these regions. My study draws upon several of Katzenstein's insights, including the importance of Europe and East Asia and the differential ways in which they have extended and institutionalized American power in their regions but also set limits on it as well.

[35] This study focuses primarily on the international order created by the United States and the other great powers. It does not fully illuminate the wider features of world order that include America's relations with weaker, less developed, and peripheral states.

Chapter 2 takes up the issues of anarchy, hierarchy, and constitutionalism in international relations. It looks at the three major mechanisms through which order is established and perpetuated, namely, balance, command, and consent. To understand the logic and character of the American postwar order, it is necessary to explore the logic of hierarchy. In contrast to anarchical forms of order, hierarchical orders entail ongoing relations of domination and subordination between polities. But hierarchical systems of domination and subordination can vary widely in their logic and organization, involving different mixes of domination and consent. I will offer a distinction between types of hierarchical political orders and focus in particular between imperial and liberal forms of hierarchy.

Liberal forms of hierarchical order require that the leading state engage in institutionalized forms of restraint and commitment. Power and domination are channeled through more or less agreed-upon rules and institutions. Chapter 3 explores state power and the logic of rule-based order. A powerful state has incentives to shape and control the international system in which it operates. While weak and subordinate states are "order takers," powerful states are on occasion "order makers." The type of order that a powerful state seeks to construct will flow from its interests and its geopolitical position in the global system. But the order that emerges will also reflect the tools and strategies that the leading state has available to it to assert control over other states.

I offer what might be called a "political control" model of rule-based institutions. Rules and institutions are tools by which states gain some measure of political control over the behavior of other actors in the global system. Doing so involves trade-offs between policy autonomy and rule-based commitments. A state bargains away some of its policy autonomy to get other states to operate in more predictable and desirable ways—all of it made credible through institutionalized agreements. The shifting incentives, choices, and circumstances surrounding this "institutional bargain" help explain variations in state commitments to rules and institutions. The degree to which the leading state sponsors and operates within multilateral rule-based relations determines the degree to which the global hierarchy has imperial or liberal characteristics.

Chapter 4 probes the prospects for rule-based order under conditions of unipolarity—and how this logic shifts as unipolarity wanes. Unipolarity does shift the incentives that a leading state has to operate under multilateral rules and institutions. Two strategies of unipolar governance are identified—"rule through rules" and "rule through relationships." The first entails traditional multilateral commitments to rule-based governance—and it has been most fully manifest in U.S. relations with Europe. The other involves building order around patron-client relations—and it is most fully manifest in America's "hub-and-spoke" relations with East Asia. Under conditions of unipolarity, the United States has incentives to move toward a hub-and-spoke system. However, to the extent that the leading state calculates that its unipolar power is waning or is rendered less effective in securing control over its environment because of a loss of legitimacy and the acquiescence of weaker states, it will find incentives to remain tied to other states through multilateral rules and institutions.

Chapter 5 provides a survey of the logic and character of the American postwar liberal hegemonic order. The core of this new order was established among the Western democracies, but its ideas and institutions were potentially universal in scope. The vision behind this order was expressed in a sequence of declarations and agreements—the Atlantic Charter of 1941, the Bretton Woods agreements of 1944, the U.N. Charter in 1945, the Marshall Plan in 1947, and the Atlantic Pact in 1949. Together, these agreements provided a framework for a radical reorganization of relations among the Western democracies—and a basis for the wider integration of much of the postwar world. Between 1944 and 1951, American leaders engaged in the most intensive institution building the world has ever seen—global, regional, security, economic, and political. The United States took the lead in fashioning a world of multilateral rules, institutions, open markets, democratic community, and regional partnerships—and it put itself at the center of it all.

Chapter 6 examines the great transformation and the crisis of the American order. It looks at the long-term shifts in the global system that have eroded the foundations upon which the United States constructed

the postwar order. These shifts amount to an inversion of the Westphalian system in which great powers maintained order through an equilibrium of power and the norms of state sovereignty. Under conditions of unipolarity and eroded norms of state sovereignty, American power has become a problem in world politics. In effect, there has been a shift over time in the character and mix of modes of American domination. The rise of American unipolarity after the end of the Cold War—together with other long-term shifts in the global system—have altered the incentives, costs, bargains, and institutions that form the foundation of the American postwar order. These shifts have rendered more problematic America's commitment to liberal hegemony and rule-based order.

I also explore the failed efforts of the Bush administration to embrace this post-Westphalian moment to impose a new system of order on the world. The Bush administration sought to build on the transformations on the global system—the rise of unipolarity and the flipping of the Westphalian order—and articulate a new vision of American-centered order. Fundamentally, the Bush administration offered up a vision of order that was, in important respects, hegemony with imperial characteristics. The United States was to step forward and provide rule and order based on its unilateral assertion of power and rights. It is a vision of American as a conservative Leviathan. This post-Westphalian logic of order has failed. The world has rejected it, and the United States cannot sustain it.

The experience of the Bush administration shows that there are limits to the ability of powerful states to operate outside the norms and institutional frameworks of liberal international order. The Bush experience shows that the world's leading state can break out of institutional and normative constraints—even those that it has itself helped create—but that there is a price to be paid for it. Lost legitimacy, partnerships, cooperation, and credibility do have consequences.

Chapter 7 explores alternative pathways away from the current crisis. I identify three different possible futures. One involves a renegotiated American-led liberal hegemonic order. Another possibility is the building of a post-hegemonic liberal order in which the United States plays a

more "normal" role within the context of declining unipolarity. A third possibility is that the crisis of the American-led order could give way to fragmentation and a general decline in order itself. Regional blocs, spheres of influence, and complex patterns of hubs and spokes could emerge in ways that leave the international order both radically less open and less rule-based.

I argue that there are several factors that will shape the pathway forward. One is the actual willingness of the United States to cede authority back to the international community and accommodate itself to a system of more binding rules and institutions. Short of a radical shift in the international distribution of power, the United States will remain the world's most powerful state for several decades to come. So there is reason to think that other countries would be willing to see the United States play a leading role—and provide functional services—if the terms are right. A second factor is the degree to which America's security capacities can be leveraged into wider economic and political agreements. The United States has extraordinary advantages in military power. The question is, to what extent can the United States use these assets to strike bargains with other states on more general rules and institutions of global order? If it can, the United States will find opportunities to renegotiate a modified hegemonic system. Finally, the degree of divergence among the lead states in their visions of global order will matter in how the crisis plays out. The question is whether non-Western rising states such as China and India will seek to use their increasing power to usher in a substantially different sort of international order.

In the end, I argue that despite America's imperial temptation, it is not doomed to abandon rule-based order—and rising states are not destined to reject the basic features of liberal international order. The United States ultimately will want to wield its power legitimately in a world of rules and institutions. It will also have incentives to build and strengthen regional and global institutions in preparation for a future after unipolarity. The rising power of China, India and other non-Western states presents a challenge to the old American-led order that will require new, expanded, and shared international governance arrangements.

If America is smart and plays its foreign policy "cards" right, twenty years from now, it can still be at the center of a one-world system defined in terms of open markets, democratic community, cooperative security, and rule-based order. This future can be contrasted with less-desirable alternatives familiar from history: great-power-balancing orders, regional blocs, or bipolar rivalries. The United States should seek to consolidate a global order where other countries "bandwagon" rather than balance against it—and where it remains at the center of a prosperous and secure democratic-capitalist order, which in turn provides the architecture and axis points around which the wider global system turns. But to reestablish this desired world order, the United States must work to re-create the basic governance institutions of the system—investing in alliances, partnerships, multilateral institutions, special relationships, great-power concerts, cooperative security pacts, and democratic security communities.