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# Global Power Shifts, Diversity, and Hierarchy in International Politics

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***Constructing Global Order: Agency and Change in World Politics***, Amitav Acharya

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 216 pp., \$79.99 cloth, \$28.99 paper, \$20.50 eBook.

***On Cultural Diversity: International Theory in a World of Difference***, Christian Reus-Smit

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 264 pp., \$84.99 cloth, \$27.99 paper, \$19.99 eBook.

## **Abstract**

Liberal internationalism is under the microscope as never before as the world experiences turbulence and anxiety. The spectre of right-wing authoritarianism and even fascism haunts western societies as struggles for recognition dominate domestic politics, while demands of (re)emerging states for international representation grow more compelling. Simultaneously, there is broader recognition of a growing legitimacy crisis of the American hegemon principally due to the mindsets and failures of its liberal hegemonic elites. Both developments are major advances in understanding how the West dominates ‘diversity regimes’ or co-opts discourses universal in origin and character, and of how the US foreign establishment has brought the world to the current conjuncture. Yet, there are limitations still. Although central, the concepts of diversity, hierarchy, and elites, need to be broadened out significantly, and rooted in corporate-class power, to fully comprehend the core crises of international order today.

**Key words:** diversity regime; hierarchy; elites; organic intellectuals; ultraimperialism; class; class inequality; western hegemony; liberal order; Koch Foundation

It is not an easy time for liberal internationalism. In both the political and academic worlds, liberal internationalism is under the microscope as never before.<sup>1</sup> The “end of history” proclamation of the late 1980s and the threat of a (boring) world with no major ideological

divisions has not come to pass. On the contrary, the world is experiencing turbulence and anxiety. Unorthodox political and ideological forces are increasingly significant across the world, and the specter of right-wing authoritarianism and even fascism haunts Western societies. Intertwined with the above, there are greater demands for recognition. The politics of identity, for example, has come to dominate domestic politics in multicultural Europe and the United States, while the demands of (re)emerging states such as China and India for international-institutional representation commensurate with their powers grow more compelling. Such concerns had motivated Samuel Huntington's controversial 'clash of civilizations' thesis at the very beginning of the post-Cold war era, which reads, in the age of Trump, as somewhat chilling. And in the post-9-11 era, Walter Russell Mead extolled the virtues of the cultural affinities and world-order-making superiorities of (racio-cultural) Anglo-Saxons.<sup>2</sup>

The demand for diversity is preoccupying leading minds in the International Relations (IR) discipline, including but not limited to Amitav Acharya and Christian Reus-Smit, whose recent books are under consideration here. So, too, is the growing crisis of legitimacy of the American liberal hegemon and the hierarchies it generated, especially due to the mindsets, entrenchment, and failures of its dominant foreign policy elites.<sup>3</sup> The resultant literature has led to major advances in understanding on the one hand of how the West dominates so-called "diversity regimes" (Reus-Smit) and co-opts the IR discourse (Acharya), and on the other hand of how the U.S. foreign policy establishment, wedded to a globalist-interventionist mindset, has contributed to bringing the world to the current conjuncture. In this essay I argue that although the concepts of diversity and hierarchy are both central to the broader scholarly discussion and to our understanding of global order, we are still missing some crucial pieces of the puzzle. In particular, I advocate for using the lens of class in order to expand on those concepts and to better capture the core crises of international order today. I will show that it is

not only constructivist scholars such as Acharya and Reus-Smit who have this blind spot, but realists and liberals as well.

Beyond greater scholarly clarity, there is also a political question rooted in extant structures of power, especially in relation to the United States: Given its desire to remain dominant, steeped as it is in a history characterized by imperial and racialized mindsets, is the United States, and the broader West, able and willing to accept Global South powers on an equal footing? Even with its first African-American president there was little, if any, discernible change in U.S. foreign policy, let alone any material improvement in domestic racial equality.<sup>4</sup> With President Donald Trump elected on a promise to put (white) America First, openly declaring whole national groups criminals, an entire continent unfit for humans, and a preference for Norwegians, the political space for “diversity” politics on an international scale remains very narrow.

#### **ACHARYA: ORGANIC INTELLECTUAL FOR NON-WESTERN ELITES?**

Amitav Acharya’s argument and empirical study shows clearly how Western IR has frequently co-opted new ideas from non-Western scholars, yet has denied the latter full recognition. He examines ideas such as human security (Mahbub al Haq) and responsible sovereignty (Francis Deng), among others, that were first developed by non-Western scholars and then went on to become “Western” and therefore universal. There is a major idea-shift, he argues, that may well be even more consequential than the global power-shift currently underway. At any rate, the sheer combination of the two shifts has and will change the world. Indeed, non-Western ideas have been changing the world for some time. Acharya, citing Eric Helleiner and Tom Weiss, among others, argues that “development” was not inaugurated by President Truman’s Point Four speech in 1952, but by the Chinese nationalist Sun Yat Sen

and Latin American thinkers in the 1930s who developed ideas about “dependency,” for example (p.198).

Using core concepts normally attributed to Western thinkers, such as the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) and sovereignty, Acharya demonstrates with compelling evidence that such concepts owe a great deal to non-Western intellectuals and policymakers. Contrary to broad opinion, RtoP was not born in 2001. It has deep Western roots but also, more immediately, roots in African thought and experience. Sudan’s Francis M. Deng and UN secretaries-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali (Egypt) and Kofi Annan (Ghana) were fundamental in formulating the idea of “sovereignty as responsibility,” emphasizing a nuanced and less threatening approach to humanitarian intervention. Rather than haughtily demanding that African states exercise sovereignty responsibly “or else,” as Western states did, Deng supported African leaders to avoid the threat of foreign intervention. He and his colleagues also urged African solutions to continental problems, as Western incursions carried the stigma of colonial-style domination. African intellectuals and practitioners were therefore crucial, not coincidental, to RtoP. Indeed, the co-chair of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), Algeria’s Mahomed Sahoun, had been tortured by French colonial forces, and four other members of the commission were also from the Global South. Sahoun argued that in Africa, “unlike other regions, our legal systems have long acknowledged that in addition to individuals, groups, and leaders having rights, they also have reciprocal duties” (p.108).

Acharya also makes an interesting argument on the central concept of sovereignty. All too often, he argues, sovereignty is viewed as a Westphalian norm extended via decolonization as “negative sovereignty” to the postcolonial world, focused on noninterference. Acharya’s fascinating archive-based analyses of the ways in which sovereignty actually made its way to postcolonial Africa and Asia tells a different story:

Third World leaders not only discussed sovereignty as something that was threatened by external interference but also as an empowering practice that gave agency to ways in which Afro-Asian powers helped shape the contours of the postwar global order itself. His analysis of the series of Asian-African conferences between 1947 and 1955 punctures the notion of postcolonial weakness, as Nehru, Sukharno, and Nkrumah, among others, constructed sovereignty in practice by delegitimizing multilateral security alliances such as the South-East Asia Treaty Organization and shaped longer-term norms of Asian regionalism.

Acharya further shows how ideational shifts toward the Global South are also culturally significant in the norms of conduct within international meetings, such as the Paris Climate Accords, and in how ASEAN members conduct business. In contrast to the adversarial and legalistic European Union, ASEAN, he argues, favors informality, inclusiveness, pragmatism, and a consensual cultural style.

In sum, Acharya notes that the above examples indicate a radical shift in the overall attitude of the postcolonial states to the more powerful Western states that lead the world order. No longer is the approach to resist or reject, as was seen at the 1955 Bandung Conference and in the 1970s with the New International Economic Order's demands for redistributing income, power, and wealth. Today, "the Rest" are looking to contribute positively to the international order. Yet "a bit of intellectual racism" appears to have prevented the Global South's intellectual and practitioner pioneers from receiving due recognition.<sup>5</sup> Acharya argues that the interdependencies of the West and the Rest, of the travel and reconstitution of ideas and norms in the modern world, combined with the re-emergence of non-Western powers to the international stage, necessitate greater recognition, equity, and West-Rest cooperation.

Acharya, in Gramscian terms, is playing the role of an organic intellectual<sup>6</sup> for re-emerging states' elites, the successor generation to the postcolonial leaders who (somewhat

more radically) demanded a redistribution of international power in a New International Economic Order.<sup>7</sup> In that regard, however, one could raise a major issue with the “non-Westernness” of some of the more important intellectuals and practitioners he discusses. Francis Deng, for example, worked for an American think tank (Brookings), was educated in part in London and at Yale, and has taught at MIT, Johns Hopkins, and held a Distinguished Fellowship of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Though he has certainly brought an African experience to his perspectives on world problems, especially of displaced persons, he is also a member of the cosmopolitan elite. His African experience in itself is necessary and important. But there are limits to how radical a shift such greater diversity of *global elites* in the halls of power might actually offer to those, the majority of the world’s population, who are not so represented.

### **REUS-SMIT: WHOSE CULTURAL DIVERSITY?**

In an interdisciplinary study, and in the context of rising non-Western powers, xenophobia, and nationalism, Reus-Smit explores “the heterogeneous cultural contexts in which diverse international orders have evolved” (p. ix). Such powerful dynamics motivated Reus-Smit to “rethink the relationship between cultural diversity and international order,” (p. x) reinforced by his positive personal experience of culturally-diverse environments. Making the case for taking culture seriously, he argues that the “practices of organizing cultural difference also feature in the constitution of international orders” (p. xiii). He states his claim most succinctly when he writes that “culture is always heterogeneous and contradictory . . . . Social institutions play a key role in its patterning, and . . . culture . . . shapes political orders not as a deeply constitutive or corrosive force but as a *governance imperative*”<sup>8</sup> (p. 5; italics mine). The dynamic therefore is significant, as the powerful “take extant cultural heterogeneity and

construct authorized forms of difference” (p.8). The question that is not addressed, however, flows directly from this claim: who are the power-holders who take, reshape, and authorize cultural difference? In the same section of the book, Reus-Smit notes that “hegemonic beliefs affect the nature of an order’s basic institutions,” though tellingly there is no reference to the origins of these “hegemonic beliefs” (p.12).

Reus-Smit’s interesting new concept—“diversity regime”—injects into the IR discipline the importance of culture and cultural diversity in any full understanding of international orders. In the first volume of a planned trilogy, Reus-Smit suggests that world history and international orders are really diversity regimes. That is, in addition to reflecting material power hierarchies, international orders or empires are also active organizers and authorizers of cultural hierarchies—of who’s in, who’s out—and their interrelations. In the current study, Reus-Smit spends most of his time arguing for the importance of cultural factors in international ordering; and over successive chapters he takes to task realism, constructivism, rational choice theory, and liberal internationalism for their relative neglect of cultural factors. At its core, the book’s main question is one of the most significant in world politics at this point: “Can the prevailing diversity regime accommodate new conjunctions of power and articulations of difference?” (p. 15).

Liberal internationalists, as well as constructivists such as Acharya, would be more or less optimistic on this score. Reus-Smit, I suspect (though he does not quite explicitly state his conclusion), would suggest that given that diversity regimes change over time and that Western societies value multiculturalism over assimilation, and despite the rise of white identity politics, accommodation will be difficult but doable. There is faith, at a deep level, that the liberalism of the international order and its cornerstone states will allow it to cope with changing global power and cultural distributions and diffusions, and it will move to accommodate non-Western cultures and states. But I would suggest that while such moves

may empower non-Western political, cultural, and economic elites, the international order would remain far off from cultural, political, and economic equality given its elitist character.

Interestingly, Reus-Smit was inspired by Acharya's call to IR scholars, as president of the International Studies Association, to recognize and repair the narrowness of Western IR scholarship, noting that their work and ideas had excluded the majority of the world's peoples. And Reus-Smit's study, like Acharya's own, represents an important advance toward that reparation. International Relations, like the world itself, is opening up (although, it would appear, just at a time when nationalisms, walls, and barriers are ever more significant).

#### **BROADENING THE BASIS OF OLIGARCHY?**

In 1975, Tom Farrer wrote in *Foreign Affairs* that demands by postcolonial leaders for a new international economic order could easily be sated by a few concessions to a few aspiring "middle class" Third World powers. Those leaders, he said, were no more interested in equality than Western leaders were. They simply wanted more influence for themselves and their fellow elites. Giving them a small measure of inclusion, Farrer argued, would be akin to how big industrialists handled upsurges of worker movements in the 1890s' United States—concessions to effectively divide and weaken.<sup>9</sup>

Farrer was writing about the liberation-generation of postcolonial leaders, not the leaders of Brazil, China, or India of today. The latter have largely embraced the Washington consensus, exhibit little emancipatory rhetoric let alone ideologies, and appear today as firmer supporters of capitalist globalization than President Trump. They preside over societies that are deeply unequal and are therefore witnessing massive social and political

unrest, a decline in the legitimacy of established political institutions, and the emergence of new and unpredictable forces.

Surveying the current landscape, Acharya and Reus-Smit, having embarked on their separate but related projects, have produced studies that open minds and ask pressing new questions. At precisely the moment of global power shifts, and the re-emergence of civilizational approaches demanding separation and hierarchies, two leading IR scholars have produced an urgent call to see the world differently—to recognize the contributions of the non-West, its influence on key concepts and international norms, as well as the significance of culture and cultural diversity-ordering regimes. Though related, their outlooks do diverge somewhat. Acharya predicts and welcomes the full flowering of a nascent “multiplex world” system of deep interdependencies and networks that, he hopes, will break down West/non-West dichotomies and unequal power relations as a way out of the current crisis of liberal international order. Reus-Smit, for his part, welcomes the flowering of a similar diversity and diffusion of power but wonders if the United States/West would or could fully accept non-Western demands for cultural equality in a new diversity regime.

What both Acharya and Reus-Smit neglect, however, is class, and class inequalities which are re-emerging as potent ideas and political forces after spending so long in the shadow of the Soviet collapse and the liberal triumphalist celebration of the end of history, not to mention the domination of identity politics. Class and class conflict may be the deeper forces, the undertow, while xenophobic politics and identity politics more generally remain important. Sexism and racism, for example, remain major barriers to recognition, dignity, and opportunity. The identity politics movement also has a tendency to divide loyalties and class attachments, cutting across and defusing class conflicts and class-based politics. It began as a movement that argued that class is at the core of power distributions, but further stipulated that race and gender were *additional* double and triple burdens for workers of color or

women workers and therefore should be recognized in the demands of movements for equality. It has become a series of autonomous movements that cut across and undermine solidarities rooted in class relations.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, great inequalities of income, wealth, and therefore power persist across West and non-West alike, and this fact is giving rise to a new generation of class-focused thinkers and politicians.

In the absence of class politics and conflicts, we see the limitations of the new vantage points that Acharya and Reus-Smit have opened up. As the future British Prime Minister Anthony Eden noted in 1928 in the House of Commons: “We do not have democracy, nor will we ever have it. What we have done in all progress of reform and evolution is to broaden the basis of oligarchy.”<sup>11</sup> The worry is that after much struggle we may well achieve the kind of multiplex world order or diversity regime that Acharya and Reus-Smit desire—one in which the true contributions of West and non-West are recognized, synthesized, and celebrated; in which cultural relations and hierarchies are re-envisioned and articulated; and yet one in which serious problems of class inequality persist.

In the works under consideration here, hierarchy is principally understood as unequal relations between West and non-West, with a case made for breaking down the dichotomy through recognition of the contributions made by the non-West to “Western” ideas and norms, as Acharya demonstrates. This hierarchy can be diminished, he argues, by fully recognizing the aforementioned diversity of thought, opening the way to a “multiplex world” of mutual recognition and diffused power. Yet, what Acharya is actually arguing for is a more *inclusive* hierarchy, not *against* hierarchy per se. His prescription gives little recognition to another increasingly significant aspect of global hierarchy—inequalities of income, wealth, and political power. These inequalities *within* states/societies are powerful drivers of political challenges from below, yet both Acharya and Reus-Smit appear to recognize only horizontal inequality *between* states/cultures/civilizations under the banner of

diversity. The authors' perspective overlooks growing movements worldwide that have recently created greater political space for anti-elitism and opposition to class inequality. This has come in the form of right-wing populist anti-elitism resulting in the election of Donald Trump, UK voters choosing to exit the European Union, as well as the rise of left-wing political movements, leading to the 2015 election of Jeremy Corbyn to leader of the British Labour Party, Bernie Sanders's 2016 presidential campaign, and support for the French "yellow vests" movement. Notably, President Trump's populist rhetoric—beyond a psychological wage – a feel-good factor for swathes of white voters in having recaptured the presidency from cosmopolitan elites like Barack Obama -has yielded little material benefit to ordinary Americans, while corporate tax cuts and deregulation supported by his administration have exacerbated standing inequalities. Nevertheless, attitudinal shifts against elite politics, and a greater movement toward socialist thinking in the United States,<sup>12</sup> suggest the popular-political terrain may be fertile for radical change movements.

In order to place class more centrally in our study of the international politics of the present, I suggest we pay more attention to the works of Antonio Gramsci and of Karl Kautsky. Specifically, I take Gramsci's concept of a "historic bloc" (effectively a coalition of cross-class interests that define the core hegemonic political, economic, and ideological concepts and regimes of a particular historical era) and internationalize it by bringing states, international public and private organizations, domestic civil society, and elite private institutions across the West-Rest dichotomy into closer connection. This is to "Gramscianise" Acharya's multiplex world by rooting it in domestic class-based inequalities. For all its promise of diversity, Acharya's multiplex world looks like elites from the West-Rest sharing power and providing mutual recognition, while presiding over unequal corporate-dominated societies. Gramscian class politics suggests that while demands for diversity diminish one

type of hierarchy, such change does not address rebellions from the working and middle classes, the energy for which, at the moment, is largely being harnessed by the Right.

While Gramsci paid greater attention to domestic politics (and most subsequent Gramscians applied his ideas largely in discussions of Western interstate and economic relationships), Kautsky helps us to understand international politics as being rooted in class conflict that has resulted in what he describes as inter-ruling class collaboration, or “ultra-imperialism.” Contra Lenin, Kautsky argues that just as multinational corporations manage competition by forming cartels across states and economies, so too do ruling classes and states ally or cooperate to limit their conflicts (preventing great power wars) and maximize their class positions. If we combine ultra-imperialism with Gramsci’s (international) historic bloc, we can understand international organizations, states, and their elite and civil societies all as elements of the elite global upper-class.

By thus incorporating class into our analysis, we might more clearly recognize how deeply class inequalities are embedded in political party and elite policy agendas and great power strategies. This clearly has important implications for scholars who argue more narrowly for West-Rest diversity recognition and for reform of the *mindsets* and agendas of U.S. foreign policy elite. For both liberals and realists, the answer lies in recognizing varying kinds of restraint.

### **THE REALIST CRITIQUE; CRITIQUING THE REALISTS**

Acharya and Reus-Smit are not alone in overlooking class as a key driver in international order. Recently there has been a surge in deep and scathing assessments of U.S. liberal foreign policy elites by some influential liberal and realist scholars alike. As we have seen above, Tony Smith appreciates but critiques American liberal hegemony. Equally

interestingly, Stephen Walt and other realists such as John Mearsheimer and Christopher Layne have launched withering critiques of the U.S. foreign policy establishment that they argue has led the United States to one disaster after another since the 1990s and, unwittingly, built the platform for the rise of President Donald Trump's America First-ism. Those realist critiques, recently invigorated by new research programs funded by the Charles Koch Foundation that works in tandem with the Trump Republican Party, superficially echo<sup>13</sup> the critical political economy-oriented analysis of Bastiaan van Apeldoorn and Naná de Graaff, who connect the very U.S. foreign policy elites Walt and Layne lambast to corporate elite networks.<sup>14</sup> The advantages of Apeldoorn and de Graaf's work, however, is that it both points out some of realism's deficiencies and offers a way to evaluate Acharya's and Reus-Smit's suggestions for moving forward.

In all of these critiques, the class question hangs unanswered over the IR scholars of U.S. power, both liberal and realist. They see that the United States has waged war after disastrous war over the past quarter century under the banner of improving the world—spreading democracy, building nations, promoting and protecting human rights, fighting terrorism. For Smith, it is pure imperial hubris, “end of history” triumphalism in need of a strong dose of the philosophy of restraint. But they cannot see the relevance of class; their theories retain deep faith in American democracy and its historic promise. As I will show, however, their critiques of the system perpetuate a narrative that relies on global affairs being determined by a largely class-based international foreign policy elite.

To realists bent on exposing the “great delusions” and the “hell of good intentions”<sup>15</sup> of American power, the “cant” of the democratic peace, the way forward for a foreign policy elite wedded to militarized liberal hegemony is *strategic restraint*. Receiving research funds from the Charles Koch Foundation, among others, realists appear to depart from analyzing the structural sources of state behavior to analyzing the domestic politics of foreign policy.

The foreign policy elite, Walt argues, means well but is entrenched and self-perpetuating, rewarded regardless of results, and has, up until Trump, reigned supreme. Trump primarily threatens their program with his rhetorical attacks on core institutions and relationships built over decades by the liberal establishment—NATO, the UN, EU, and WTO, among others. His personal style—racialized, disrespectful, aggressive— and his dismissal of the concerns of other states under the banner of “America First” undermines American credibility. The moral authority—to the degree that it exists—at the heart of the liberal hegemonic project has little or no role to play in the embrace of the “principled realism” of Trump’s “America First” national security strategy. Though Trump tapped into popular discontent with unsuccessful and never-ending post-9/11 wars and questioned liberal hegemonic strategies, Walt criticizes him for policy incoherence and his inability to follow through. But Trump has opened the way for realists to come to the fore with a grand strategy of restraint and offshore balancing.

Putting the pros and cons of strategic restraint aside, it would appear that the realists in question have had to soften their attachments to what are considered key elements of realist theory—including its central tenet that the structure of the international system largely determines the strategies of states. Walt and Mearsheimer have both had to move toward domestic elites’ power to explain the “wrong” choices made by the liberal hegemonic establishment. This represents a major departure, first signaled by Walt and Mearsheimer’s study of the Israel lobby in U.S. foreign policy back in 2007.

In addition, it is quite remarkable that leading realists accept at face value liberal policymakers’ own claims as to the motivations behind their strategies. That is, liberal hegemonic elites are accepted as genuinely and benignly promoting democracy, human rights, and other liberal values. The question of the character of U.S. political democracy itself also remains unquestioned; indeed, Mearsheimer lauds it as the best possible system, without indicating any of its deep-seated problems that are more evident given the crises of

current U.S. government and politics. This elides the thorny problem that state policymakers' motivations are explicable, in theory, as a defense of elite and class-based interests justified and legitimized by liberal ideology. This is no loss to those who write on elite theory, of course, who welcome the boost that the conversion of such leading realists provides to a theory and approach that has been making a comeback over the past several years.

However the above discussion is concluded, the fact remains that realists have made a major advance in explaining how American power works. The significance of entrenched elites, which was a major research field across the social sciences from the 1950s to the 1970s, is back. Yet realists are still just skimming the surface of entrenched power by focusing only on elites. Apeldoorn's and de Graaff's studies of elite networks and U.S. grand strategy push further, bringing us back to class issues. They situate these elites in the various corporate sectors of U.S. political economy, recognizing them as central to a whole complex of power that also includes universities, think tanks, foundations and the major state departments and agencies.

Approached in this way, with class as central, we may conceive of world politics and international orders as complex systems featuring political, economic, military, and cultural hierarchies, driven by a variety of political-economic and cultural factors, rooted in corporate class power that features interconnected networks of intellectuals, think tanks, media, and state agencies. A model that casts international orders, interstate alliances, and civil society networks across boundaries, rooted in state-backed corporate power, better reflects the actual core drivers of global politics: a class-based system of elites largely managing change top-down to reflect the necessities of the uneven development of relative power across the world's states and other major actors.

Neither Western recognition of non-Western elites' contributions to ideas nor a diversity regime that is more accommodating of Eastern and other elite cultures nor the

urging of liberal-imperial or offshore balancing and strategic restraint is going to result in sufficient change to address real-world dynamics that are producing and reproducing inequality, hierarchy, and the concentrations of wealth and political power that they enable. There is growing social pressure, just beneath the surface of most societies and reflected in national and international politics, that threatens to break out in extreme levels of social fracturing and political violence. This is widely recognized not just by Marxists but by the World Economic Forum and other corporate groups and analysts.<sup>16</sup>

Returning to Acharya and Reus-Smit, however, it is testament to the health of the IR discipline that we are having such a breadth of debate that is more inclusive of radical ideas. It suggests that the ideas themselves are good ones and worth debating. But it also speaks volumes about where the world stands today: anxious, volatile, and fearful for the future. The old ideas and ways are sufficient neither to make sense of our problems nor to help navigate the present and future. The world appears to be at an inflection point. As Antonio Gramsci noted a century ago, “The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.” Therefore, he continues, “When such crises occur, the immediate situation becomes delicate and dangerous, because the field is open for violent solutions, for the activities of unknown forces, represented by charismatic ‘men of destiny’.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> G. John Ikenberry, Inderjeet Parmar, and Doug Stokes, Ordering the World? Liberal Internationalism in Theory and Practice, Special Issue of *International Affairs* 94, 1, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Those themes are discussed and critiqued as essentially embedded in liberal internationalism in Inderjeet Parmar, Racial and imperial thinking in international theory and politics, *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 18, 2, 2016; pp.351-369.

<sup>3</sup> Tony Smith, *Why Wilson Matters: The Origins of American Liberal Internationalism and Its Crisis Today* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017); Stephen M. Walt, *The Hell of Good Intentions: America’s Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018); John J. Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion. Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

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<sup>4</sup> Mark Ledwidge, Kevern Verney, and Inderjeet Parmar, eds., *Barack Obama and the Myth of a Post-Racial America* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Amitav Acharya, “‘Idea Shift’: How Ideas from the Rest are Reshaping the Global Order,” *Third World Quarterly* 37, no. 7 (2016), p. 1165.

<sup>6</sup> Gramsci’s analysis of the role of intellectuals is really important given we are discussing scholars advancing major ideas critiquing existing orders or ways of thinking about and doing things. It situates them in a relationship with major institutions/states/elites/classes, which therefore play an important role in the limited character of their analyses and suggested changes. This is not to suggest any kind of malign or deliberate sinister outside influence, but to argue that ideas develop in certain milieus, intellectual and political communities and networks, within research funding regimes with specific priorities; see, Inderjeet Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

<sup>7</sup> Philip S. Golub, “From the New International Economic Order to the G20: How the ‘Global South’ is Restructuring World Capitalism from Within,” *Third World Quarterly* 34, no. 6 (2013), pp.1000–1015.

<sup>8</sup> Clearly, this view of culture’s significance has echoes of the work of Gramsci, the British Gramscian Stuart Hall, and Edward Said.

<sup>9</sup> Tom J. Farer, “The United States and the Third World: A Basis for Accommodation,” *Foreign Affairs* 54, no. 1 (October 1975), pp.91–92.

<sup>10</sup> Asad Haider, *Mistaken Identity: Race and Class in the Age of Trump* (London: Verso, 2018).

<sup>11</sup> Inderjeet Parmar, *Special Interests, the State and the Anglo-American Alliance, 1939-1945* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 191.

<sup>12</sup> Council of Economic Advisers, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/The-Opportunity-Costs-of-Socialism.pdf>; <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/243362/meaning-socialism-americans-today.aspx>.

<sup>13</sup> [www.charleskochfoundation.org/news/mit-harvard-launch-collaborative-international-studies-program/](http://www.charleskochfoundation.org/news/mit-harvard-launch-collaborative-international-studies-program/); Thomas B. Edsall, “Trump and the Koch Brothers are Working in Concert,” *New York Times*, 6 September, 2018, at [www.nytimes.com/2018/09/06/opinion/trump-koch-brothers-alliance.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/06/opinion/trump-koch-brothers-alliance.html). Mearsheimer indicates Koch Foundation support for his book in its Preface. See John J. Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), p. x.

<sup>14</sup> Bastiaan van Apeldoorn and Naná DeGraaff, *American Grand Strategy and Corporate Elite Networks: The Open Door since the End of the Cold War* (London: Routledge, 2016).

<sup>15</sup> Stephen M. Walt, *The Hell of Good Intentions: America’s Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018); John J. Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion. Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

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<sup>16</sup> World Economic Forum, *Global Risks 2018: Fractures, Fears and Failures*; at <http://reports.weforum.org/global-risks-2018/global-risks-2018-fractures-fears-and-failures/>; *Business Insider*, “Ray Dalio Says the Economy Looks like 1937 and a Downturn is Coming in about Two Years,” 18 September 2018, [www.businessinsider.com/ray-dalio-bridgewater-debt-crisis-downturn-coming-about-two-years-2018-9?r=US&IR=T](http://www.businessinsider.com/ray-dalio-bridgewater-debt-crisis-downturn-coming-about-two-years-2018-9?r=US&IR=T). (Dalio is the founder of Bridgewater Associates hedge fund); Ian Bremmer, *Us vs. Them: The Failure of Globalism* (New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2018).

<sup>17</sup> Antonio Gramsci, in Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, eds., *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), p. 210.