

# WORLD POLITICS PARADIGMS AND THE FATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE THIRD WORLD: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

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Human rights conditions in the Third World invariably are tied to and affected by systemic dynamics, societal conditions, and global forces. Thus, any assessment or reassessment of the "rights" situation must be seen in these contexts. The intention here is neither to overstate the importance of external influences nor to underestimate the significance of the internal sources of human rights violations.<sup>1</sup> Rather, this paper is particularly concerned with the evolution of world politics and its impact on the human rights conditions and the process of democratization in the Third World.

The four paradigms of realism, interdependence, socialism, and the New World Order are here examined to scrutinize the prospects of human rights in the Third World. Many believe that the New World Order has raised false expectations for the betterment of human rights conditions in the Third World, since governmental organs a) still hold the power over both the legal and legitimate coercive institutions; b) control the political process autonomously in most internal and external arenas by excluding societal forces; and finally c) operate in accordance with the functional prescriptions of state sovereignty in international settings.

A growing number of scholars, politicians, and practitioners have recently laid countervailing claims to the realist model, contending that in a period of rapid global change and increasingly complex international interdependence, the vitality of world politics rests on reforms in various areas necessary to meet new political and moral challenges. The recourse to long-practiced political orientations, they add, may be a familiar path, but it is no longer an effective one.

World politics and its old foundations based on the realist view have inexorably been pulled into a new fray. One consequence is the opportunity to reorder policy priorities in a rapidly integrating world. Quiet diplomacy might still serve best under certain circumstances, but one cannot reduce human rights policy to a propaganda tool. In the following sections, I will examine realism, interdependence, neo-Marxism, and the New World Order paradigms to dissect the moral consequences that flow from each view. The purpose here is to assess critically each model in relation to its moral questions and transformations in order to shed some light on the evolution of world politics and its shifting paradigms and their implications for international morality. In doing so, I will first examine each view, its interpretation of moral questions, and its pitfalls. The focus then will shift to the significance of human rights' place in the current debate on the transformation of global politics.

## Statist Morality

The skepticism regarding the prospects of human rights conditions in the Third World has elicited a number of questions and explanations. Human rights conditions, realists have argued, have yet to improve by way of an evolutionary societal process independent of state actions. The fate of human rights in the Third World is intimately related to the destiny of the state. The extent to which states use human rights policies *consistently* and *evenly* both within and across nations defies any discernible pattern. The realist view of the evolution of human rights policies simply reformulates the state's age-old and deep commitment to, and primary concerns with, the improvement of the human rights conditions of its own citizens.

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<sup>1</sup> For articles emphasizing the internal sources of human rights violations see Samuel P. Huntington, "Will More Countries Become Democratic?" *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 99, No. 2, Summer 1984, pp. 193-218; Neil J. Mitchell and James M. McCormick, "Economic and Political Explanations of Human Rights Violations," *World Politics* Vol. XL, No. 4, July 1988, pp. 476-498; Jack Donnelly, "International Human Rights: A Regime Analysis," *International Organization*, Vol. 40, No. 3, Summer 1986, pp. 599-642; Conway Henderson "Human Rights and Regimes: A Bibliographical Essay," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 4, November 1988, pp. 525-543; *Christian Science Monitor*, January 26, 1989, p. 19.

In a qualified espousal of moral parochialism, Richard Dagger<sup>2</sup> calls into question the recent cosmopolitan turn in moral and political philosophy by noting that compatriots' needs, rights, and concerns take priority when other things are equal. This priority is derived from the argument of reciprocity and also from the characterization of the body politic quo cooperative enterprise.

This priority is not absolute, for the main consideration continues to be the severity or extent of deprivation in question.<sup>3</sup> Still, the political community counts and has a place within human rights concerns. This, in a sense, reinforces the politicians' ultimate concern with their fellow citizens' status. The basic question of whether the state is an extension and thereby an integrated part of society, inexorably arises in such a context.

Some have claimed, albeit along different lines, that the state is an autonomous unit, operating distinctively from other sectors and social forces.<sup>4</sup> This is especially true in the Third World, runs the argument, given the fact that with longevity of power always at stake, and lines of separation of powers and authority always blurred, the state becomes more than a reconciler of societal interests and in fact a party to the dispute, employing heavy-handed policies to suppress dissent.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, rational calculations and priority settings by states render any serious and persistent commitment to human rights policies not only difficult but also uncertain. Human rights commitments are linked, notes Irving Kristol, to a "hidden agenda," the items of which are clearly set and defined by the urgencies and the ambiguities of "power politics."<sup>6</sup> Commitments to the realization of human rights are guided exclusively by a number of amoral prerequisites of statecraft such as tenure of office, politico-economic stability, and development and national integration policies. Realism as such is not devoid of moral codes, rather it practices a different code of morality which is predicated essentially on utilitarian or situational ethics. The net result, it is argued, is morally warranted in the name of national interest and security.

Advocating a new realism in strategic thinking on human rights, Michael Novak notes that the universal protection of human rights necessitates a moral revolution in human habits and institutions: "It would be utopian to expect such a transformation to occur instantaneously. It would be illusory to hold that understandings and institutional forms could be universally homogeneous."<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, he adds, the massive abuses of human rights all around the world impel people to search for protection.

To sum up, realism regards states as the main actors in the global scene with practically exclusive powers in all domains, enjoying presumptive and putative forms of legitimacy. Concerned with the political ethics of statecraft, the states' primary aim is to achieve "security" and "stability." The observation of human rights would then appear to be subject to geopolitical and strategic considerations. In the process of rendering and evaluating the decisions, human rights policy goals may, like any other policy objective, be compromised. The outcome of such a process, it is argued, would engender a desirable degree of security and stability, if not consistency. Likewise, moral realism regards the promotion of democracy in the Third World by external forces as a perilous, destabilizing, and anti-status quo process capable of jeopardizing conventional and time-honored operative rules of interactions between and among the states. The statist approach views with skepticism the ethics of interventionism

<sup>2</sup> Richard Dagger, "Rights, Boundaries, and the Bonds of Community: A Qualified Defense of Moral Parochialism," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 79, No. 2, June 1985, pp. 436-447.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 446-447.

<sup>4</sup> For a critique of such arguments see Gabriel A. Almond, "The Return to the State," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 82, No. 3, (Sept. 1988), 853-874; see especially p. 856.

<sup>5</sup> See Robert P. Clark, *Power and Policy in Third World* (3rd ed.) New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1986, p. 106.

<sup>6</sup> Irving Kristol, "Human Rights: The Hidden Agenda," *The National Interest*, No. 6, Winter 1986/87: 3-11; see especially p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Michael Novak, *Human Rights and the New Realism: Strategic Thinking in a New Age*, New York: The Freedom House, 1986, p. 13.

in the name of furthering democracy around the world. Humanitarian interventions and nation-building missions in the case of failed states (e.g., Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda) are questioned largely because such tasks require large-scale and sometimes open ended commitment; they also demand military intervention and the use of force in another nation's domestic jurisdiction, which is a clear violation of the norms of nonintervention and state sovereignty.<sup>8</sup> One observer reflects on such reservations: "The State Department is . . . more comfortable with Realpolitik, partly because the natural inclination of diplomats overseas is to maintain good bilateral relations and get along with those in power, rather than complicate their own lives by delivering unpopular demarches."<sup>9</sup>

### The Pitfalls Of Statist Morality

In response to the statist account of morality one can plausibly maintain that states cannot take shelter under the banner of sovereignty in order to escape questions of legitimacy in both their domestic and international guises. The question of the morality of states, as Vincent proposes, is an empirical one to be settled by observation and not presumed a priori under all circumstances. "There is," Vincent notes, "no reason to assume that states as a matter of fact do protect a community of shared experiences and cooperative activity."<sup>10</sup>

Similarly, the limits to the logic of the pursuit of interests as subsumed under the concepts of "national interest" and/or "national security" merit further consideration. First, it is plausible to suggest that although the national interest of the state begins with security, it does not arise totally and absolutely from security, especially when and if security is defined solely in the traditional military sense. Second, security for any one state cannot be total and perfect. Some costs for other states are conceivable. Marshall Cohen suggested that "perfect security might require, but could not in itself justify, world domination."<sup>11</sup> He agrees that the amoral pursuit of power unrestrained by any moral stricture is an untenable position. His definition of security further attests to the implausibility of this notion: "A state's failure to defend its ideological influence, its economic advantages, or even many of its treaty rights, may in no way decrease its ability to provide for the physical security of its population".<sup>12</sup> It seems that the ideological components of security have given way to its practical components under the clout of new global challenges, a condition which is regarded by many scholars as essential for the curtailment of interstate conflicts and insecurity.<sup>13</sup>

By and large, the nonmilitary components of security now figure equally if not more prominently in the calculation of security. This is evidenced by the importance attached to the life-support system, whether be it of an ecological, environmental, demographic, or economic nature. How does this shift in approach toward security affect Third World human rights conditions? Third World politics is an extension of global politics and thereby naturally reflects some of its context's recurring manifestations. The lessening of tension inducing ideological and geopolitical considerations along with movements toward demilitarization, will eventually translate into improvements in socioeconomic and societal welfare dimensions.<sup>14</sup> Whether these will be loaded with moral implications remains to be seen.

Needless to say, the statist status-quo with its narrow self-interest rationale cannot account

<sup>8</sup> Richard N. Haas, *Intervention: The Use of American Military Force in the Post-Cold War World*, Washington, D.C.: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1994; see pp. 67-86.

<sup>9</sup> For further information on this line of argument see Graham E. Fuller, *The Democracy Trap: The Perils of the Post-Cold War World*, New York: The Penguin Group, 1991, p. 254.

<sup>10</sup> R. J. Vincent, *Human Rights and International Relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 116.

<sup>11</sup> Marshall Cohen, "Moral Skepticism and International Relations" in Kenneth Kipnis and Diana T. Meyers (eds.), *Political Realism and International Morality*, Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1987, pp. 15-34; see p. 28.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27

<sup>13</sup> Lester R. Brown, "Redefining National Security," in Steven L. Spiegel (5th ed.), *At Issue: Politics in the World Arena*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988, pp. 517-530.

<sup>14</sup> On this, see Mary Kaldor "The World Economy and Militarization," in Saul H. Mendlovits and R.B.J. Walker (ed.), *Towards a Just World Peace: Perspectives from Social Movements*, London: Butterworths, 1987, pp. 49-78; see especially pp. 72-77.

for new political developments in the world political arena. Nowhere is the failure of statist morality more obvious than in its moral ambivalence toward the Chinese military crackdown on students (June 4, 1989-Tiananmen Square Massacre) and the use of chemical weapons by Iraq in its war with Iran (1980-88) and against its own Kurdish population, and rifts caused within NATO in late 1994. In these cases, the realist approach hinged upon selective action. Post-Tiananmen politics in China encompasses the encouragement of foreign investment and trade and the removal of sanctions by the U.S. The Iraqi use of chemical weapons against civilians (the Kurdish ethnic group) and Iranian soldiers raised many objections worldwide. In the case of Bihac (Bosnia), the failure of diplomacy and peacekeeping missions to prevent further bloodshed has led to further wrangling among NATO allies and the United Nations. The result has been the withdrawal of U.N. troops, which is another indication that states are hesitant to commit themselves to moral causes regardless of the circumstances.

Realist selective moralism, however, will at some point culminate in ethical and policy confusion. Burma and South Africa furnish good cases in point here. The Western European countries, Japan and the United States cut off foreign aid to Burma (Myanmar) in recent years in response to its human rights violations. A strong point can be made that the West and Japan have lived up to the expectations of the international community. But living up to these principles in the case of Burma, which is politically isolated, poor, and strategically unimportant,<sup>15</sup> represents yet another vulnerable side of the realist moralism. South Africa, in contrast, illustrates a morally insensitive approach (by realists) to a country whose very political order and structure defied for so long the basic tenets of international morality. The political consequences of such moral duplicity posed formidable obstacles and challenges to realist thinking, masked by the term "constructive engagement." Realism caused moral convolution through obsessive efforts to draw a distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian governments. While such a distinction is not entirely baseless, its significance is often overestimated. Some have found that if repression is defined as imprisonment, torture and killing, and based on aggregate human rights measures, then there is no statistically significant variation between these two types of political regimes.<sup>16</sup> Clearly, the evolution of both political types has in the end meant similar abuses for the members of these societies.

New trends and transformations in recent decades have been in the forms of functional interdependence, communication and commercial linkages, and structural reforms among and between nations. These changes have meant accommodations to new political realities and in turn have helped nudge along the process of addressing human rights conditions in the Third World. It is to this transformation that we next turn.

### Morality And The Interdependent World

Both practical and rational considerations render reforms in the realist approach inevitable, although the present trajectories still indicate that the most difficult task is to reconcile political realism with cosmopolitan morality.<sup>17</sup> An exclusive subscription to amoral statecraft is now indefensible. The emergence of cosmopolitan morality provides us with a desperately needed antidote to the ills of realism which have long infected the debate on global human rights conditions. Given both the continuing salience and intensity of the "low politics" of economic and social affairs, and the role of transnational and nongovernmental actors in world politics, and also the ineffectiveness of force as a policy instrument, an alternative perspective to the realist portrait of world politics appears to be more attractive. The interdependence model is not the single most accurate description of political reality and, being an ideal type, world

<sup>15</sup> *New York Times*, Jan. 15, 1989; section 4, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup> Neil, J. Mitchell and James M. McCormick, "Economic and Political Explanations of Human Rights Violations," *World Politics*, Vol. XL, No. 4, July 1988, pp. 476-498; see p. 495.

<sup>17</sup> Stanley Hoffman, "Reaching for the Most Difficult: Human Rights as a Foreign Policy Goal," *Deadalus: Journal of the Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Fall, 1983, pp. 19-49.

realities may not always conform to it.<sup>18</sup> However, its effectiveness in accounting for certain circumstances cannot be denied.

The reality of economic interdependence has imposed restraints of a staggering magnitude on nation-states and has enlarged, in the words of Wolfram F. Hanrieder (1978), the area of "low" distributive politics.<sup>19</sup> The domestication of international politics has brought with it institutional and attitudinal changes hospitable to the fast-growing economic interdependence among nations. This has been especially true in cases where the nations' situations have approximated interdependence conditions. The ideological, political, and theological aspects of life have not been immune to changes occurring in other socioeconomic spheres. But all this has not necessarily led to global political integration and an emerging global culture. Resistance to change and control has been another expected reaction. An eloquent demonstration of this is presented by Hanrieder, who calls interdependence a halfway house between the disintegration and integration of politico-economic processes.<sup>20</sup>

Opposition to the present trading systems characteristic of world capitalism is specifically aimed at global liberalism and not at economic interdependence and its resultant realities.<sup>21</sup> The distinction between global liberalism and interdependence should not obscure the fact that the consequences of interdependence can be equally disintegrative and problematic, for its actual outcome hinges on the *patterns* and *qualities* of transactions between and among states.<sup>22</sup>

The external environment may be of decisive significance in influencing a society's move in a democratic or non-democratic direction.<sup>23</sup> Huntington has argued that "democratization is the result of diffusion rather than development,"<sup>24</sup>--an argument which Huntington himself later modified (1991). Having examined Catholicism and its adjustments in the 1970s and 1980s (in Portugal, Spain, the Philippines, Poland, Hungary, and Latin America), he concluded that economic development is a primary force for cultural and religious evolution.<sup>25</sup> In response to the question of why the diffusion of democratic ideas and institutions in the non-Western world has produced no enduring results, Huntington emphasizes the existence of the correlation between democratic ideas and institutions in the Third World, the duration of colonial rule (specifically the duration of British imperial rule), and the rise and decline of the powerful democratic states of global stature, such as the United States.<sup>26</sup> Huntington makes no reference, however, to the fact that colonial rule was also equally exploitative, intrusive and disruptive for the colonies and that the decline of democracy in East Asia and Latin America in the post-War period was not so much a function of the waning of American influence--as he would have us believe--but rather a reflection (at least in part) of direct foreign intervention to hold in check the political processes and outcomes in those societies over which the foreign powers exerted considerable influence. A closer look at the structures of poverty--exacerbated by ethnic conflicts--in many former colonies, reveals the distorted economies that these countries inherited from the colonialist powers. Structural constraints, observes Stephen P. Marks, today persist in many facets: "indebtedness, dependency, the global reach of multinationals, and other manifestations of the international division of labor favoring

<sup>18</sup> See especially Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1977.

<sup>19</sup> Wolfram F. Hanrieder, "Dissolving International Politics: Reflections on the Nation-State," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 72, No. 4, 1978, pp. 1276-1287.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> See Stephen D. Krasner. *Structural Conflict: The Third World Against Global Liberalism*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985.

<sup>22</sup> See K.J. Holsti, "Interdependence, Integration, or Fragmentation: Scenarios for the Future," in Charles W. Kegley, Jr. and Eugene R. Wittkopf (eds.), *The Global Agenda: Issues and Perspectives* (2nd ed.), New York: Random House, Inc., 1988, pp. 216-230; see especially p. 218.

<sup>23</sup> See footnote one in Samuel P. Huntington, "Will More Countries Become Democratic?" pp. 205-207.

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

<sup>25</sup> See Samuel P. Huntington, "Religion and Third Wave," *The National Interest*, No. 24, Summer 1991, pp. 29-42; see especially p. 42.

<sup>26</sup> Huntington, 1984, op. cit., pp. 205-207.

Western Europe, North America, and Japan (and other newly industrialized Asian countries) have only increased, further weakening the authority of civilian rule in many developing countries."<sup>27</sup>

The extension thesis has some merits, but its limitations further compound the normative focus on the human rights issues. For instance, the intersection of the colonial states' and the colonies' moral and cultural constructs have proven to be irreconcilable. Interestingly enough, Huntington admits that with the growing integrationist trends in the world, interdependence at some point does become incompatible with coexistence: "How long can an increasingly interdependent world survive part-democratic and part-authoritarian and totalitarian?"<sup>28</sup> Huntington is almost certain that "coexistence may require a slowing down or halting of the trend toward interdependence."<sup>29</sup> This is a clear illustration that interdependence is a harbinger of varying tensions in the future between entirely different political systems.

The evidence on the implications of interdependence seems to be mixed. Political implications of interdependence suggest more access to—and conceivably more influence on—government and world politics through both governmental and nongovernmental organizations by the subjects of nation-states. The ethical implications of emerging pluralism and domestic and international participation by individuals cannot be deemed negligible. It should be noted, however, that since states still have a large array of coercive techniques and means at their disposal, the intensity and frequency of this participation can be questioned and its effectiveness and outcome may at best be uncertain. The ethical implications of interdependence insofar as they relate to cultural conditions are context-sensitive, erratic, and ultimately unknowable. In numerous cases, interdependence has generated cultural entanglements whose nature has been intrusive and interventionist and thus has presented obstacles to indigenous cultural growth and adjustment, and has culminated in more intense nationalistic sentiments (consider, for example, the rise of Islamic radicalism in the Middle East).

Multinational corporations stand out as perfect examples. The economic clout of multinationals, known as agents of economic transformation, has overshadowed their host countries' national planning and industries. The transnationalization of economies by the multinationals has carried with it cultural norms and values alien to the host countries. In response to economic transnationalism, recurrent waves of protectionism have gained currency.<sup>30</sup> The growing resentment about the multinationals' distortion of national economies reflects somewhat similar nationalistic reactions all over the Third World. The anxiety of Third World political elites about the intensity of this resentment and the ensuing troubling political atmosphere associated with it hardly need emphasizing.

Some foreign policy analysts have proposed a conciliatory noninterventionist posture toward Third World dictatorships, which could reduce extensive involvements and commitments. Such a policy, known as "benign detachment," results from a backlash against interdependence rationalization.<sup>31</sup> Others have warned against "cultural imperialism."<sup>32</sup> Still other analysts have upheld the thesis that, given the fact that these countries are weak, vulnerable, and externally dependent, the option of nonintervention would seem particularly unrealistic.<sup>33</sup> It may be argued that interdependence culminates in emerging norms and

<sup>27</sup> Stephen P. Marks, "Promoting Human Rights," in Michael T. Klare and Daniel C. Thomas, eds., *World Security: Trends and Challenges at Century's End*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991, pp. 295-323; see p. 304.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

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

<sup>30</sup> See Seyom Brown, *New Forces, Old Forces, and the Future of World Politics: Post-Cold War Edition*, New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1995, pp. 207-211.

<sup>31</sup> See Ted Galen Carpenter, "The U.S. and Third World Dictatorships: A Case for Benign Detachment," in Steven L. Spiegel (ed.) *At Issue: Politics in The World Arena* (5th ed.), New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988, pp. 9-23.

<sup>32</sup> See John T. Rourke, "Postscript: Should Morality and Human Rights be Guiding Foreign Policy Principles," in John T. Rourke (ed.), *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in World Politics*, Guilford, CT: The Dushkin Publishing Group, Inc., 1987, pp. 236-237 and 251; see p. 251.

<sup>33</sup> See S.C. Nolutshungu, "Nonintervention: Ethical 'Rules of Disregard' and Third World Conflicts," in Moorhead Wright (ed.), *Rights and Obligations In North-South Relations: Ethical Dimensions of Global Problems*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986, pp. 131-158; see p. 131.

evolving world culture, and that a greater consensus about the meaning of human rights seems likely to grow.

However, the application of human rights concerns encounters many difficulties.<sup>34</sup> For instance, the concept of moral interdependence raises legitimate questions and is subject to serious ambiguities. Some believe that states have consummatory autonomy in implementing regime norms—in this case those of international human rights—at the national level.<sup>35</sup> While these norms are fully internationalized, decision-making regarding such norms remains largely national. Although it is true that human rights are ultimately a profoundly national issue, the basic structure of contemporary international politics would not appear to be one of unbridled neutrality. In the absence of world government, global politics will be manipulated by the interests of the hegemonic actors. Some scholars concede that the existence of a single hegemonic state is crucial for the establishment of strong, stable human rights management systems; they argue that the East-West rivalry of the Cold War came to spoil the discussion of human rights.<sup>36</sup> It is hard to see why this external dimension of the human rights debate has been underplayed. The argument that there exists a politically weak moral interdependence insofar as it relates to the states' unwillingness to experience some degree of diminished national sovereignty in exchange is persuasive;<sup>37</sup> yet failure to recognize that material and moral interdependence are contextually-defined features of international politics also deserves due reference.

John Gerard Ruggie observes that interdependence only allows ethical claims to be articulated; a world community has not been created where these claims can be addressed.<sup>38</sup> Ruggie admits that "human rights are more than a mere rationalization of structures of power;" but nonetheless, he asserts, "their international normative status remains closely dependent upon the projection of power, the defense of interests, and the nature of a political community existing among states."<sup>39</sup> While the internationalization of human rights concerns today is undeniably part of global politics, in practise it means nothing but nudging states into permitting their vindication:

To do this may well require that many states become stronger, because only an economically strong state can generate the resources and provide the opportunities to fulfill stipulated economic rights, and only a politically strong state can permit institutionalized opposition, social protest, and individual freedoms.<sup>40</sup>

Further, it may be argued that functional interdependence does not lead to the rectification of the existing political-economic inequalities among states. Fundamentally, interdependence does little to change the substance, if not the forms, of the existing dominant order. Any transformation of the status-quo, the firmly entrenched international political system, faces uncompromising constraints, especially in the domain of human rights.

To sum up, interdependence assumes that economic necessities compel the states to coexist with multinational and global actors. This elicits progressive economic gains for the states. To the extent that states enjoy performance legitimacy in generating growth and prosperity for the nation, their stability can be warranted in the name of the economic ethics of "development." Concerned with the geoeconomics of "development," states' benevolent developmental and coercive orientations seem to be condoned at least in the short run. In the process of global economic integration, human rights policy goals and outputs will become chiefly a function of such economic interactions. The results, advocates of this approach

<sup>34</sup> See Conway Henderson, "Human Rights and Regimes: A Bibliographical Essay," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 4, November, 1988, pp. 525-543; see p. 534.

<sup>35</sup> See footnote one in Jack Donnelly, "International Human Rights: A Regime Analysis," p. 608.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 616.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 619.

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in Conway Henderson, *op. cit.*, p. 529.

<sup>39</sup> See John Gerard Ruggie, "Human Rights and the Future International Community," *Daedalus*, Fall, 1983, pp. 93-110; see especially pp. 98-99.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

note, is that socioeconomic foundations of political democracy will in the long run be stabilized.

### The Pitfalls Of Interdependence

Despite merits in the economic sphere interdependence with its ambiguous impact on legal and moral norms leaves one in a state of limbo. For instance, the connection between interdependence and intervention (unilateral or otherwise; its purpose and scope) has an unclear status; whether interdependence enhances or diminishes the possibilities of intervention is as yet unclear. Also, considerations of prudence outweigh those of morality: "local injustices--however extreme--are preferred to strategic disadvantages."<sup>41</sup> Increased economic transactions among states have not fostered an effective and marked mutual reciprocity in moral and ethical areas.

It seems rather futile to speculate or even hope that a massive reshaping of values as a result of interdependence is in the offing. The supportive evidence we have is misleading, for it only applies to economic contexts, and it would not do to draw inferences about human rights situations from these contexts. In a global framework, the interdependence position on ethical and moral debates is inadequate. It bypasses the question of state equality in global relations dominated by power politics. "It is," in the words of Stanley Hoffmann, "the big powers who tend to lay down the law."<sup>42</sup> Interdependence and its practical implications are severely confined within this framework.

Interdependence does not appear to extend to the realm of moral choice for politicians. International politics encompasses, using Hoffmann's terms, "no generally accepted alternative to Machiavellian statecraft."<sup>43</sup> This is understandable in the absence of a world community. However, Hoffmann also acknowledges that survival and interdependence are now guiding principles which limit the possibility of devising Machiavellian schemes in the dark.<sup>44</sup>

Interdependence, notes Hoffmann, moves nations toward peaceful coexistence. The reasons are political (survival) and socioeconomic (mutual dependency and material need satisfaction) and are clearly not moral or virtue-related by any means. It is not clear, however, what the implications for peace and coexistence in the moral spheres are. It is safe to assume that interdependence is conducive to coexistence, but misleading to suppose that it creates the conditions in which moral issues are more likely to be tackled. The expectation that interdependence induces morally-related solutions has thus far appeared to be a spurious presumption. Although the advocates of interdependence are correct in asserting that democracy will become stable if its economic foundations are properly laid out--as demonstrated in the cases of Greece, Portugal and Spain--they have yet to present evidence that interdependence leads to the kind of development that is conducive to the immediate protection of human rights.

### Socialist Morality

In this section, I will attempt an eclectic analysis of Socialist morality, combining concepts of classical Marxist theory, world system theory, and dependency theory writings. Although a detailed catalogue and a developed theory of human rights in the Socialist model are nonexistent, it is possible to postulate a Marxian approach to human rights. In keeping with the Marxian concept of the individual, the state, and the society, one can deduce certain abstract and concrete rights. At the national level, rights are tools of satisfying needs (material and non-material); needs and their corresponding rights are universal; basic needs-rights must

<sup>41</sup> J. E. Hare and Carey B. Joynt, *Ethics and International Affairs*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982, pp. 162.

<sup>42</sup> Stanley Hoffman, *Duties Beyond Borders: On the Limits & Possibilities of Ethical International Politics*, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1981, p. 4.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.



be granted the highest priority; economic development is a collective (economic) right capable of overriding, if necessary, other fundamental rights (autonomy, democracy, political freedom, and community).<sup>45</sup> At the global level, however, Neo-Marxists and Socialists turn to socioeconomic and historical parameters in an effort to formulate their position in the areas of human rights. The Socialist account of international morality finds its explanatory logic in the universal capitalist mode of production and its resultant class formations. By promoting inequality within and between the poor and the rich countries, the capitalist world economy stabilizes on a global scale the subordinated role of states to its own dominant global order. States' special social formations thus become almost entirely dependent on external forces. The Socialists' normative concern with maintaining and enhancing equality retains primarily an economic context in which capitalism as the embodiment of uneven and dependent development constitutes the major hurdle on the way to a desirable Socialist normative order. The two causal agents of this inequality, the bourgeois state and imperialism, it is said, manifest the core problems that Socialists must face.<sup>46</sup>

Political repression is then depicted as a function of the states' performance in such a context, serving to "extend the life-span of the domination and inequality inherent in capitalism."<sup>47</sup> However, the key explanation for political repression, argue neo-Marxists, lies in global linkages between and among states. These links have led some scholars to use terms such as repressive trade (Klare and Arenson, 1981); intermediate, semi-peripheral, sub-imperialist economics (Frank, 1979); social-formations of peripheral capitalism (Amin, 1976); militarized politics (Falk, 1977); the structural tendency to repress (Furtado, 1973); the dominance system (Galtung, 1980); the dependency-political exclusion effect (Timberlake and Williams, 1984); and modern world system (Wallerstein, 1974, and Baran, 1967).<sup>48</sup>

By promoting substantial inequality between the capitalist core and the Third World periphery, note neo-Marxists, global economic integration and diffusion of Capitalism helped bring about mercantilist imperialism. The mechanisms by which such structural dominance (imperialism) was consolidated, entailed "aid and arms transfers, multinational corporations, technology transfers, trade, international bodies such as the IMF and the World Bank, or more general structural features such as the international division of labor."<sup>49</sup> The place of the Third World in the global system has changed very little despite vividly impressive transformations in the world capitalist system during the post-War period: "Two major distinguishing features of the Third World did not change in general, and in a fundamental sense, the chains of dependency binding the periphery to the center remain. Secondly, the gap between the periphery and the center keeps on widening, as it has throughout the history of capitalism."<sup>50</sup> Capitalism so conceived has clearly prevented the realization of values such as equality and democracy.

<sup>45</sup> See Richard Nordahl, "A Marxian Approach to Human Rights" in Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, (ed.), *Human Rights in Cross-Cultural Perspectives: A Quest for Consensus*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992, pp. 162-187; see pp. 183-184.

<sup>46</sup> See R. D. McKinlay and R. Little, *Global Problems and World Order*, Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1986, p. 122.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.

<sup>48</sup> See Michael T. Klare and Cynthia Arenson, *Supplying Repression: US Support For Authoritarian Regimes Abroad*, Washington, D.C.: The Institute For Foreign Policy Studies, 1981; Andre Gunder Frank, "Unequal Accumulation: Intermediate, Semi-Peripheral, and Sub-Imperialist Economies," *Review*, Vol. 11, No. 3, Winter 1979; Samir Amin, *Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976; Richard A. Falk, "Militarization and Human Rights in the Third World," *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (1977); Celso Furtado, "The Post-1964 Brazilian 'Model' of Development," *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Vol. 8, No. 2, Summer 1973; Johan Galtung, *The True Worlds: A Transnational Perspective*, New York: The Free Press, 1980; Michael Timberlake and Kirk R. Williams, "Dependence, Political Exclusion, and Government Repression: Some Cross-National Evidence," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 49, February 1984; Emmanuel Wallerstein, "The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts For Comparative Analysis," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 16, 1974; and Paul A. Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967.

<sup>49</sup> McKinlay and Little, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

<sup>50</sup> *Monthly Review*, "Globalization--To What End? Part II," Vol. 43, No. 10, March 1992, pp. 1-9, see p. 1.

### The Pitfalls Of Socialist Morality

The Socialist perspective on human rights is premised on several unwarranted sequential assumptions. Firstly, it is believed that freedom will naturally evolve from welfare policies. Thus, material and structural-political guarantees of human rights must be accorded primacy over formal (juridical, administrative, etc.) procedures.<sup>51</sup> Social equality is a precondition for the enjoyment of political freedoms and thereby socio-economic rights are a necessary condition for the fulfillment of other (civil-political) human rights. In the last decade or so, this way of thinking has led to the emergence of a claim called the "right to development." Although reassuring, the claim has the potential to be confusing. It is reassuring because it reinforces the instrumentality of development in its link to human rights; however development is thought of, at best, as an end in itself, and, at worst, as an obdurately overriding imperative. What is troublesome about this claim is that, pragmatically, it offers no guidelines as to how the protection of human rights can be institutionalized by the states. This claim, when imbued with the reductionist tenet that development equals human rights, is empirically unsafe. Should development, however, be defined in terms of human potentialities, self-worth and dignity, and of empowering the individual with civil-political and economic entitlements, such a claim would be logical.

Secondly, it is surmised that the implementation of political democracy presupposes the existence of social democracy. The unqualified tolerance of this assumption and its varied inferences are both normatively suspect and theoretically unsophisticated. The factual implications of such assumptions have been widely discussed and refuted as contemporary Socialist experimental states demonstrate. The Socialist Third World (Burundi, Burma, the Congo, Iraq, etc.) and the Communist Third World (Afghanistan until 1992, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Laos, etc.) have no better records in protecting human rights than the rest of the Third World.

Thirdly, it is assumed that the state, acting on behalf of the working class, advocates "national development" objectives to ultimately abolish Capitalism in favor of economic collectivism and equality. The neo-Marxist scholars fail to give any reasonable explication of the upsurge of demands for human rights in what used to be the Socialist World. Admittedly, a large number of these violations were perpetrated at the hands of governments and Marxist advocates appear unable to articulate a global explanation for the widespread practice of political repression in those countries. While corporate decisions today reflect more evidence of an international division of labor wherein states lack potency, writes Ernie Keenes, "political action--the collective pursuit of freedom, democracy, identity, and such--remain at the level of the social formation."<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, even if the failure of Socialism is attributed to economic collapse rather than lack of democratic governance, it can be said that economic maturity and development, although they are significant and relevant conditions, are morally defective and bound to fail without concomitant, supportive political development and openings.

From the preceding discussion, it may be seen that Socialist international morality has yet to reconcile its presumed universal ideals, such as egalitarianism, with those of mundane Third World political realities, such as nationalism and developmental demands. It can also be said that the Socialists' disregard for cultural and religious perspectives and their firm grip on many Third World societies has added yet another handicap to this approach. In view of the prevalence of market-oriented appeals in many former Communist countries in the post-Cold War era, the core normative order of Socialism needs to be re-examined and adjusted. The failure of Socialism to take account of the internal factors in human rights

<sup>51</sup> See Anna Michalska, "The Socialist Conception of Human Rights--The Polish Perspectives," in Jan Berting, et. al., (ed.) *Human Rights in a Pluralist World: Individuals and Collectives*, Netherlands: Roosevelt Study Center, 1990, pp. 155-165; see p. 158.

<sup>52</sup> See Ernie Keenes, "Paradigms of International Relations: Bringing Politics Back In," *International Journal*, Vol. 44, No. 1, Winter 1988-89, pp. 41-67; see p. 59.

abuses (a repressive elite, a corrupt establishment, anachronistic institutions, and ill-founded political and economic choices), and of unconditionally identifying equality with liberty, bodes ill for the fate of human rights in the Third World.

### The New World Order And Morality

The New World Order--while still a vague and abstract notion to many-- continues to be seen as a paradigm capable of shedding some light on the dynamism of political changes and democratization that have transpired in the post-Cold War world. By creating the anticipation that the winding down of the Cold War will render such democratization practical, this trendy and inflated perception has raised many profound moral questions in the three core areas of privatization, democratization, and the protection of human rights in the Third World. The New World Order is generally understood as a worldview supportive of collective security based on equilibrium rather than hegemony, economic integration rather than protectionism, shared leadership rather than self-centered pursuit of power, the pursuit of peace and stability through principles and genuine diplomacy rather than controlled anarchy through sterile diplomacy and the use of force, and finally preoccupation with North-South economic concerns as opposed to East-West power balances.

The transformation of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe since 1989 and the subsequent events in the Persian Gulf Crisis of 1990-91 had a misleading consequence, in that they caused widespread belief in the propositions that "the only global power for some time to come will be the United States, and the only world order will be an American one;"<sup>53</sup> and also that the unipolar moment has arrived in which our best hope in this new global order lies in American strength and determination, "the strength and will to lead a unipolar world, unashamedly laying down the rules of world order and being prepared to enforce them."<sup>54</sup> These two propositions have in a short span of time proven utterly unpersuasive in light of the fact that the world has since further disintegrated into regional blocs over which the U.S. may possess little or no measurable influence in the foreseeable future. Of these regions, the two that concern the U.S. the most are (the coming together of) Central Europe (Mitteleuropa) under German leadership and the Pacific Rim bloc under Japanese leadership.<sup>55</sup> By emphasizing social markets and organized capitalism respectively, these two leading nations (Germany and Japan) appear to be more committed to regional conceptions of political economy than to a truly international one. Conflict between these distinct paradigms of international and regional order may at some point become inevitable.<sup>56</sup> Throughout the Third World, the U.S. role in collective security arrangements remains exceedingly unclear. In the absence of any collective security arrangement with these countries, and in the absence of any checkmating force capable of countering U.S. presence and influence, the U.S. role has been relegated to one of interventionism (Panama 1989, the Persian Gulf 1990-91, Somalia 1992-93, and Haiti, 1994). The New World Order can be made to appear to justify adventurist policies. Interpretations such as the unipolar movement in the name of the New World Order could easily involve the U.S. in a host of obscure conflicts that will lead to a hemorrhage of lives and wealth.<sup>57</sup> Such interventions could unnecessarily engage the U.S. in the world's troubles if the U.S. assumes the role of world policeman, or world nanny, or an international Don Quixote for which the country has no will and/or resources.<sup>58</sup> Interventions for humanitarian purposes in the wake of the post-Cold War era lead to political tasks whose costs far exceed the willingness of the American public to pay.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>53</sup> See James Kurth, "Things to Come: The Shape of the New World Order," *National Interest*, No. 24, Summer 1991, pp. 3-12; see p. 5.

<sup>54</sup> See Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 1 (1990-91): 23-33; see p. 33.

<sup>55</sup> See James Kurth, op. cit. pp. 6 and 9.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7-11.

<sup>57</sup> Ted Galen Carpenter, "The New World Disorder," *Foreign Policy*, No. 84, Fall 1991, pp. 24-39; see p. 39.

<sup>58</sup> See James Schleginger, "New Instabilities, New Priorities," *Foreign Policy*, No. 85, Winter 1991-92, pp. 3-24; see pp. 23-24.

<sup>59</sup> Michael Mandelbaum, "The Reluctance To Intervene," *Foreign Policy*, No. 95, Summer 1994, pp. 3-18.

It was believed that privatization would solve many of the problems now surrounding the Third World such as debt, inefficient bureaucratic structures, poor infrastructure, and obsolete administrative structures. Aside from the fact that the claims of privatization and its impact on development indicators of the Third World countries can be overstated,<sup>60</sup> it appears that, by being overwhelmingly obsessed with commercial interests, the Multinational Corporations (MNCs)—the agents of spreading capital, technical expertise, and management skills—have displayed a woeful insensitivity to local cultural and traditional practices. The nature of their involvement continues to raise serious ethical concerns.

In the New World Order the role of the United Nations as a main actor in the global arena is indisputable. However, the impact of the UN on global political transformation will depend on numerous variables. In assessing the variables, account must be taken of the range of restrictions and the rigidity that presently exist in the UN's organizational structures. Regardless, one important variable continues to be the resources at the UN's disposal. Echoing the significance of that variable, John Tessitore and Susan Woolfson maintain:

If the New World Order is to be anything more than self-serving rhetoric, it is evident that the United Nations will need new resources to establish and maintain an early-warning system about developing crises as well as the sort of political commitment that will allow the organization to play a more prominent role in mediating conflicts, in ensuring respect for human rights, and, if need be, in dispatching aggressors or would-be aggressors by force of arms.<sup>61</sup>

Further, the New World Order views the OAS (the Organization of American States) and the CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and other regional associations as new actors on the global scene that can potentially influence the human rights conditions of the developing countries, not to mention the growing significance that non-government organizations (NGOs' such as Amnesty International, Helsinki Watch, America Watch, etc.), fact-finding missions and reports have assumed in that part of the world.

The New World Order stresses concomitantly normative and verifiable types of legitimacy as the basis of a nation-state's legitimacy; it espouses political parity and democracy by promoting institutional-legal means of political participation, with the anticipation that elections and functioning political parties will result from the liberalization process. The protection of human rights will be best served in the wake of a greater commitment to normative considerations and less predilection in favor of geopolitics or geoeconomics. Ultimately, democratization will mean greater respect for and realization of human rights in Third World countries.

To establish legal, political, and economic foundations for democratization, the advocates of the New World Order support an ecumenical process, comprising the sociopolitical, religious, cultural, and economic forces of global integration and morality that tie existing realities of state sovereignty to the perennial principles of global transformation. The fate of a subject or citizen of any nation-state can no longer be seen only within the exclusive jurisdiction and prerogative of the nation-state. Good political *choices* and correct *governance* will prevail. New political cultures, amenable to the civil and political rights of the individual, will logically evolve in Third World countries, and will create new democratic settings, however incipient or fragile, for the long range improvement of human rights situations in these societies.

### The Pitfalls Of The New World Order

The arguments in favor of the New World Order, although partly convincing in regards to the current trends toward democratization, suffer from a broad range of shortcomings. Three pitfalls fit this paper's purview.

<sup>60</sup> Richard A. Yoder, Phillip L. Berkholder, and Brian D. Friesen, "Privatization and Development: The Empirical Evidence," *The Journal of Developing Areas*, Vol. 25, No. 3. April 1991, pp. 425-434; see p. 432.

<sup>61</sup> John Tessitore and Susan Woolfson (eds.), *A Global Agenda: Issues Before the 46th General Assembly of the United Nations*, New York: University Press of America, 1991; see p. 2.

The first shortcoming is that the advocates of the New World Order simply ignore an important component of the human rights debate, that is, economic rights, when confronted with the basic question of whether institutional reforms and political democracy, in the face of immense economic disparity, will be feasible, stable or just.<sup>62</sup> This is a legitimate concern given the fact that the standard explanation in this area has long been that factors stimulating socioeconomic equality have a stabilizing impact on democratic structures.<sup>63</sup> Additionally, it is erroneously held that the plan for democracy can initially get off the ground by "quick fix" solutions such as procedural changes and the introduction of elections in Third World countries.

A quick glance at the anti-democratic movements in the Caribbean and in Latin America (coups in Venezuela and Peru, unrest in Bolivia, and the Guatemalan army's repeated massacres of Indian land protestors) shows that the process of political change cannot move into full swing without a fundamental restructuring of the socioeconomic structures presently in place. The biggest demonstration of recent years in Bolivia was led by housewives and was called the "March of the Empty Pots." This demonstration symbolized the fundamental problem facing the coalition government of Bolivian President Jaime Paz Zamora, and in fact much of Latin America.<sup>64</sup> Endemic and relentless economic tribulations in the area keep undermining the fledgling Latin American democracies, indicating that without proper foundations and traditions, democracy may simply cause further stalemate and chaos.<sup>65</sup>

The second shortcoming is that the New World Order proceeds from the old positivist and empiricist assumptions that democracy as a universal and objective reality is replicable all over the world and that such replication is made possible through the "diffusion" of values and institutions associated with the conventional Western-Liberal trajectories. As such, the proponents of the New World Order have wrongly inferred that Western-style politico-economic liberalism is the route that Third World nations must take.

Political liberalism and pluralism and their accompanying costs may not be cheerfully welcomed in social welfare systems such as the Persian Gulf mini-states, in which political discontent has been partially defused or disguised through the admittedly good distribution record of these regimes in the social areas (health, education, and housing).<sup>66</sup> Similarly, many African specialists, such as Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, refute the diffusionist interpretations of political reforms in Africa, and propose the similar argument that those African governments (e.g., Kenya and Zimbabwe) with relatively potent economies were better equipped to avoid considerable constitutional reforms in the early 1990s by "undercutting political protest through economic concessions," while countries like Cameroon and Gabon were seemingly unable to employ this strategy.<sup>67</sup> Even in those Arab and African countries of the Middle East and North Africa (Egypt, Jordan, Algeria, Yemen [prior to its civil war], the "unfulfilled" case of Tunisia and the "failed" cases of Lebanon and the Sudan) where there is evidence that political openings and elections (sometimes genuine and at other times carefully controlled) have made considerable inroads in the political processes,<sup>68</sup> Western-style democratic standards continue to remain a hard sell.

<sup>62</sup> For an interesting discussion of economic rights, see Darryle M. Trimiew, "The Economic Rights Debate: The End of One Argument, the Beginning of Another," in D. M. Yeager, (ed.), *The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics: 1991*, Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1991, pp. 85-108.

<sup>63</sup> For a detailed discussion on this issue, see Zehra F. Arat, *Democracy and Human Rights in Developing Countries*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991; see especially pp. 55-75 (p. 75) and 79-101 (p. 99). Also see Tatu Vanhanen, *The Process of Democratization: A Comparative Study of 147 States, 1980-1988*, New York: Crane Russak of the Taylor and Frulis Group, 1990, pp. 191-197; see p. 195.

<sup>64</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, April 9, 1992, p. 3.

<sup>65</sup> *New York Times*, April 12, 1992, p. 2E.

<sup>66</sup> See James A. Bill and Robert Springberg, *The Politics in the Middle East*, 3rd ed., New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1990, p. 29.

<sup>67</sup> Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, "Toward Governance in Africa: Popular Demands and State Responses," in Goran Hyden and Michael Bratton, (eds.) *Governance and Politics in Africa*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992, pp. 27-55; see p. 45.

<sup>68</sup> For an excellent analysis on this topic, see Michael C. Hudson, "Possibilities for Pluralism" *American Arab Affairs*, No. 36, Spring, 1991, pp. 3-7.

Moreover, events in India (the "Ayodhya Affair" in which Hindu fundamentalists demolished the 16-century Babri Mosque to build a temple to Ram), Israel (the rise of Islamic radicalism among the Palestinians), Sudan (the alliance between secular and religious forces entangled in a civil war), and in Pakistan (the resurgence of Islamization programs) all indicate that anti-secular trends are a predictable part of the historical dialectic between the forces of religion and democratic secularism.<sup>69</sup> Thus, Western-secular brands of democracy are bound to meet with serious challenges in those parts of the Third World experimenting with democracy. For the most part, human rights concerns and domains remain indigenously defined and evaluated to the exclusion of legitimate outside criticism. The New World Order spells unpleasant challenges for many of these countries still grappling with the unmanaged crises of identity, legitimacy, and participation.

And finally, it is widely held that electoral mobilization is practically coterminous with democratization, that is, the erection of formal democratic institutions and structures. This assumption has been challenged from several standpoints. Electoral compromises may prove to be a short-lived tactical ploy used by leaders to derail genuine drives toward reform in response to internal and external pressures. Lack of economic endowments, contextual factors such as appropriate social structures and democratic experience, alternative political values, and viable oppositional coalitions render such transition difficult, if not impossible. What is more, Bratton and van de Walle assert that in Africa "the opportunism of opposition political leaders, their patronage followings, and their links with current state elite, all suggest that a change of leaders would probably perpetuate a clientelistic pattern of politics as usual."<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, by emphasizing so emphatically the presence or absence of formal democratic institutions (e.g., national elections) in places like El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Haiti, notes Cingranelli, U.S. foreign policy has in the recent past "appeared to be unconcerned about other kinds of human rights abuses by 'democratic' regimes."<sup>71</sup>

Arguably, one can advance the proposition that a prolonged process of economic liberalization may, despite short-term uncertainties, be the proper course to take, as the existing institutions and the underlying structural forces in many Third World countries need to be prepared for appropriate transitions in due time. In the absence of well-established supporting structures and institutions, unleashing any stable democratization process is bound to exacerbate the problems of protecting civil-political rights in the short run. Such incongruity normally provokes chaos and a related prolonged instability which, in turn, lends credence to the rationales supporting historically familiar autocratic routes. Rothchild and Ravenhill show that there potentially exists an inexorable conflict--at least in the short and medium terms--between economic liberalization and democratization in Africa in the 1990s:

Structural adjustment is a painful process for all economies, particularly those that are as weak as Africa's. In that a principal objective of adjustment is to bring about a reduction in budget deficits, governments are frequently forced to reduce expenditures on social programs and end subsidies for foodstuffs. Employment in state-owned corporations is also often drastically reduced. These measures add to a popular discontent that has been provoked by more than a decade of economic decline. There are few immediate winners from structural adjustment, which tends to increase inequalities within a society.<sup>72</sup>

In sum, the New World Order has raised a myriad of serious moral questions which defy myopic and facile assumptions. The hopes raised seem to be less than consistent with realistic expectations just as the optimism of the post-Cold War era nurtures false beliefs regarding an imminent peaceful and democratic world. It is to this thought that I turn next.

<sup>69</sup> For further information on this topic, see Graham E. Fuller, op. cit., pp. 205-211.

<sup>70</sup> Bratton and van de Walle, op. cit., p. 54.

<sup>71</sup> David Louis Cingranelli, *Ethics, American Foreign Policy, and The Third World*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 214.

<sup>72</sup> Donald Rothchild and John Ravenhill, "Retreat from Globalism: U.S. Policy Toward Africa in the 1990s," in Kenneth A. Oye/Robert J. Lieber/Donald Rothchild, eds. *Eagle in a New World: American Grand Strategy in the Post-Cold War Era*, New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1992, pp. 389-415; see p. 412.

### False Alarm Or Realistic Expectations?

The significance of human rights' place in the current debate on world political transformation has been closely associated with the view that security today is not total, and the moral components of policy and politics are no longer subordinate to the exclusionary rule of power politics. The moral consequences of this debate notwithstanding, the actual outcome of world politics in the post-war period has for the most part been guided by the principles of "power politics" and has therefore failed the universality and relevancy tests of human rights applications and standards. In general, although human rights rhetoric has travelled beyond politically attractive slogans, its scope and effective implementation in many Third World countries has been conditioned, or perhaps more accurately, adjusted, by "power politics" requirements. The result has been that the goal of global justice has given way to powerful order and status-quo impulses; thus, the continuity of concern as reflected in the international agenda has generated no substantial impact on the majority of Third World countries.

Without undermining the importance of internal forces, one could argue that outside stimuli could undoubtedly lead to the improvement of human rights conditions.<sup>73</sup> Many problems associated with human rights conditions in the Third World are domestically (socially and culturally) conditioned, but external influences and factors are not neutral either. Recent thinking on interdependence corroborates this observation. Fred Halliday calls attention to varying forms of interdependence (or internationalism; to use the same term as Halliday). He warns against a misperception: ". . . [about] the compatibility of the economic with the political by assuming that a growing interaction in trade and finance will yield a new political understanding and that, at points of conflict, the political will yield to the economic."<sup>74</sup> Obviously, Halliday has modern history on his side as he mentions the supremacy of stability over justice and political over economic considerations at times of extreme compulsion. The existing asymmetrical global economic integration leads Halliday to coin the term "hegemonic internationalism": an all-encompassing hegemony ranging from the economic and political to cultural types.<sup>75</sup> He seems, however, convinced that the processes of internationalization will necessitate more international heteronomy or openness to the influence of others.

Thus far, the New World Order rhetoric, despite generating more groundswell concern for democracy, freedom, and respect for human rights in the world, has brought disorder and chaos for some Third World countries. There still looms the question; what if the lack of national economic capacities, historical preparations, appropriate political institutions, and cultural traditions compels leaders to resort to the old-fashioned authoritarian *modus operandi*? Although external pressures (i.e., politico-diplomatic instruments, sanctions, and legal decrees) can significantly improve human rights conditions in many Third World nations,<sup>76</sup> the conditions and institutions necessary to sustain a better human rights record must ultimately evolve in accord with the *internal* structural and ideological set ups of these countries.

### Conclusion

By considering a selection of recent literature on the transformation of global politics, I have suggested that realist, interdependence, neo-Marxist, and New World Order paradigms can go only so far in conformity with existing realities. As global perspectives, their application to human rights conditions and assessment should be viewed with many limitations in mind. Faced with new developments in the world arena, the realist model and its version of morality seems incapable of yielding a total and plausible answer to the new rise of resistance against massive and widespread abuse of human rights all across the globe.

<sup>73</sup> David D. Newsome, "The Diplomacy of Human Rights: A Diplomat's View," in David D. Newsome (ed.), *The Diplomacy of Human Rights*, New York: The Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, 1986, pp. 3-12; see p. 11.

<sup>74</sup> Fred Halliday, "Three Concepts of Internationalization," *International Affairs*, Vol. 64, No. 2, Spring, 1988, pp. 187-198; see p. 193.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> See Cyrus R. Vance, "The Human Rights Imperative," *Foreign Policy* 63, Summer 1986, pp. 3-19; and also Newsome, *The Diplomacy of Human Rights*, pp. 3-12.

The exponents of the realist model espouse the imposition of nation-states' interests and policies into moral areas, thereby restating and legitimizing the old and widely-held claim that human rights practices reflect more accurately the interests of states and their policies. Thus, the status of human rights remains dependent upon the interests and policies of the nation-states. Admittedly, two options face statism: either 1) take refuge under the cover of state autonomy and use cloak and dagger methods in confronting new human rights concerns, or 2) undergo changes and incorporate new thinking if and when one must deal with the moral questions. Those who adopt the former option regard the external tampering with the process of democratization in the Third World as an unwarranted interference in the internal affairs of these nation-states and hence politically unwise.

There are also certain circumstances which approximate the interdependence model. Few would, however, uncritically accept the proposition that moral realism must be entirely abandoned in favor of interdependence morality. The latter has seldom, if ever, led to substantial moral convergence or value pluralism or even moral equivalence of a universal character. To expect that interdependence in its economic form would gradually transform the moral and cultural complexion of nations is fanciful and unrealistic. The spillover impact of economic interdependence into socio-cultural mores, known as "moral alteration," appears to be something of a misnomer in the vocabulary of human rights. The terms under which this moral transformation is to occur raises difficulties of a staggering magnitude, not least of which are the issues of moral superiority and cultural dominance. With its pragmatic shift to "low politics" and "economic integration," interdependence undoubtedly provides and accelerates more interaction opportunities between nations; but it also furthers the possibilities of moral and cultural conflicts. As to promoting democracy in the Third World, the interdependence perspective presupposes a functional process in which political democracy emerges as a practical outgrowth of an interdependent world. The normative dimensions of such a process are disputable.

The Socialist morality, substantially lacking a thorough account of human rights, relies on a sequential logic that the social welfare policies of the government are meant to guarantee the protection of civil-political rights. This logic, too, has proven to be empirically unreliable and normatively suspect. The putatively universal orientation of this morality has also been disputed. Likewise, the reductionist assumption of this brand of morality, that autonomous economic development is the sole necessary precondition for establishing any political democracy, is also problematic.

The conceptual confusion and theoretical flaws that have permeated the human rights debates in the Third World under the New World Order rubric have begun to overshadow the moral energy galvanized by earlier optimistic projections of this new era. Equally frustrating has been the tendency to transfuse the proposition that the notion of protecting human rights is tantamount to establishing a democratization process. One scholar has argued that the burgeoning practice of competitive elections in Africa will not by itself rectify the widespread violation of human rights: "Democratization . . . may enhance popular expectations at a time when government capabilities are declining. Additionally, ethnic or religious animosities can be inflamed in the process of electoral mobilization. Simply equating democratization with greater recognition and protection of human rights is a mistake."<sup>77</sup> Another scholar has written that "[h]uman rights are not the equivalent of justice, or 'the good society,' or, as some think, democracy, although the human rights idea is related to all these."<sup>78</sup>

Caught amidst an ongoing struggle with the issues of ethnicity, inequality, instability, and *de facto* poverty, Third World countries have recognized that the American experience<sup>79</sup> with

<sup>77</sup> Claude E. Welch, Jr., "The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights: A Five-Year Report and Assessment," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No. 1, February 1992, pp. 43-61; see p. 59.

<sup>78</sup> Louis Henkin, "The Universality of the Concept of Human Rights," *ANNALS: AAPSS*, Vol. 506, November 1989, pp. 10-16; see p. 11.

<sup>79</sup> See Paula J. Dobriansky, "Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy," in Brad Roberts, (ed.), *The New Democracies: Global Change and U.S. Policy*, Cambridge, MA.: The MIT Press, 1990, pp. 145-161; see p. 146.



liberal democracy has little relevance to their attempts to sustain their newly-emerging, yet ostensibly fragile, democracies. Support for protecting human rights in these countries must prevail, when necessary and appropriate, over support for plans to build complicated democratic structures and institutions. A terse summation has been made for protecting the basic rights to a means toward subsistence, security, economic and political participation, and freedom of physical movement,<sup>80</sup> and according these rights the first order of priority over and above the long-term building of sophisticated democratic structures. The Third World's existing predicaments can best be addressed by focusing on the provision of the necessary conditions for the exercise of human rights, that is, minimum economic and physical security and participation in the control of economic and political policies and institutions that regulate the realization of these basic rights. Incremental improvements in human rights practices must be encouraged without pressuring Third World countries to assimilate a Western-style democracy.<sup>81</sup> Further, the role of the UN, of regional organizations, and of NGOs in international and regional protection of human rights needs to be upgraded. For such a move to take root, a new suppleness in the principle of nonintervention must be found.<sup>82</sup> Witness the case of the U.S. military intervention in Haiti to restore a just order. If this idea is to develop into a palatable customary praxis, then attaining some form of a collective and binding consensus among the members of the U.N. appears to be necessary. Are the states, especially those in the Third World, any closer today to achieving such an obligatory consensus? Certainly not, but the idea no longer seems to be anathema, one that the states would denounce vigorously or out of hand.

While guarding against a simplistic, self-defeating or sanguine outlook (and without treating Third World autocrats overindulgently), we must, in the interest of pragmatism, pay some tribute to indigeneous forms of democracy, whether they be tribal (Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia), liberal (Botswana, Zimbabwe), or in the form of an emerging consociation (South Africa).<sup>83</sup> Some have suggested that given that democratic systems are often initially more tribal (emphasizing the primacy of political rights) than liberal (stressing the primacy of civil liberties), we should continue to espouse democratization efforts even if this involves non-liberal ideals.<sup>84</sup> This should not be misconstrued as the espousal of that stale idea euphemistically called "benign neglect." To be sure, Western support for and role in democratization and the protection of human rights in the Third World remains imperative. Nonetheless, genuine limits to such premises need to be realistically acknowledged in the interests of economic and political liberalization and in regard to the prolonged process of adjustment if the necessary conditions undergirding stable democracies are to be sustained.

<sup>80</sup> See Henry Shue, *Basic Rights: Subsistence, Affluence, and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980.

<sup>81</sup> See Brad Roberts, "Human Rights and International Security," in Brad Roberts, *Ibid.*, pp. 203-213; see p. 211.

<sup>82</sup> One such observer is B. G. Ramcharan, a director in the United Nations Secretariat and also an Adjunct Professor of International Relations at Columbia University, who in his article: "Strategies for the International Protection of Human Rights in the 1990's" *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 13, No. 2, May 1991, pp. 155-169; see p. 161, argues that the principle of nonintervention, although still retaining its essential validity, must now come under closer scrutiny by the international community.

<sup>83</sup> See Richard L. Sklar, "Democracy in Africa," *African Studies Review*, Vol. 26, No. 3/4, September/December, 1983, pp. 11-24.

<sup>84</sup> Raymond D. Gastil, "What Kind of Democracy," *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 265, No. 6, June 1990, pp. 92-94 and 96.