

“NEW” IMPERIALISMS: THE BRITISH AND US EMPIRES IN COMPARISON

Julian Go

Department of Sociology

Boston University

Paper for CHS Mini-Conference

August 12, 2009

Britain and the United States enjoyed decades of hegemony. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries respectively, they maintained economic dominance in the world-system. But hegemony can fall, and both Britain and the United States soon experienced it. Following their hegemony came a period of relative decline. In the late nineteenth century, rival powers like Germany and the United States expanded their industrial powers and took up increasing shares of world economic output. As a result, Britain's economic dominance was challenged, and a new phase of hegemonic rivalry ensued. After WWII, the United States took up the mantle from Britain, but it later declined as well. Beginning in the mid-1970s, America's dominance over the world economy became unsettled. First, economic rivals like Japan and Germany emerged, showing remarkable rates of growth and economic expansion. Afterwards, beginning in the 1990s, the newly consolidated European Union and China joined the ranks as new competitors. Like Britain in the late nineteenth century, the United States began to experience a fall from grace.

Economic historians have debated the reasons for why hegemony falls. Other scholars have traced how groups in each state have reacted to economic decline and the types of economic policies hegemony might enact to ward off decline. The purpose of this chapter is different: to consider the imperial correlates of hegemonic decline. We have seen the imperial correlates of other phases of the two powers' cycles of hegemony. During their respective periods of ascent, both the United States and Britain increasingly reached afar to construct formal empires. During their respective periods of hegemonic maturity, both shifted their imperial strategies and relied more and more upon informal imperialism. The question that begs addressing is what happened during their respective periods of hegemonic decline. As Britain and the US began to face new competition from rivals, did their previous

imperial strategies, forms or modalities change too? We might also wonder whether there was a shift in intensity of imperial activity: an expansion or contraction of imperialism regardless of which its form or modality. Great powers can fall indeed, the purpose of this paper to wonder whether such falls from economic dominance correspond with changes in imperial activity.

I begin by elaborating two phenomena. First, as noted, both Britain and the United States experienced relative decline. As this claim depends upon what *decline* means, some elaboration is necessary. Second, both Britain and the United States became increasingly imperialistic at the same time that they experienced decline. For Britain, this was manifest in a surge of military interventions and the acquisition of new colonies. Britain stepped up its imperial aggression and also shifted from informal to formal modes of control. For the US, the increasing imperialism was manifest in various new military interventions and temporary military occupations. The invasion and occupation of Iraq beginning in 2003, as we will see, was part of this increased imperialism, but it was only the tip of the iceberg. In short, we will see that both hegemons declined and simultaneously unleashed new imperialisms. Whether or not these two phenomena are related is the final issue to take up in this chapter. Were the new imperialisms but the vainglorious actions of aged great powers revisiting the imperial follies of their youth? Or was there something else going on?

FEATURES OF DECLINE

To say that hegemons “decline” is not to say that they necessarily lose their military power. Hegemony refers to relative preponderance over the world-economy. It does not refer to military or political preponderance. Hegemonic decline, therefore, only refers to economic position. Nor does decline mean that hegemons suddenly descend into the ranks of the world’s poorest countries. As stated from the outset, decline is a relative matter. In fact, during their periods of decline, both the US and Britain remained among the world’s most economically powerful countries. But relative to their previous economic monopoly of the world’s productive powers and to the capacities of other nations, they descended. It is worth highlighting some key features of this decline. It is also worth noting the similarities between the two countries’ changing economic fortunes.

Britain’s decline has been examined by numerous scholars. Most agree it began in 1868 and was exacerbated with the 1873 crash on the Vienna money market. After 1873

came the “long depression” which lasted at least until 1896.¹ This depression was marked a world-wide overproduction of agricultural and industrial goods, especially in iron and steel, and decreasing profits.² It was also accompanied by rising unemployment and slower economic growth. The depression came in fits and starts. There was a period during the 1870s, for example, when some in the British business sector and the policy elite were comparably optimistic about the economic situation. But the overarching trends throughout the period remained consistent. In terms of economic growth, for example, there was a consistent downward trend compared to the previous periods of prosperity. From 1820 to 1840, industrial production had grown at an annual rate of about 4 percent and, from 1840 to 1870, about 3 percent. But between 1875 and 1894 it grew at just over 1.5 percent annually.³ In 1879, British economists and policy-makers became worried as never before; their previous optimism was obliterated. This culminated in the establishment of a Royal Commission to investigate the “Depression of Trade and Industry.” The Commission collected information for two years, seeking evidence from trade associations, chambers of commerce, unions, and various experts. The evidence was overwhelming. There was a “serious depression, affecting most trades and industries, characterized by surplus production, low prices, poor investment opportunities and unemployment.”⁴

The depression was just one dimension of the larger issue; that is, competition from rising economic rivals, especially Germany and the United States. This means that even though the British economy was not disastrous in absolute terms, it was significantly challenged in relative terms. While some British industries such as coal or textiles increased their output, for example, their relative share of world production diminished. And in other industries like steel, chemicals, and electrical goods, Britain lost any early lead it might have held previously.⁵ British agriculture likewise faced competition, as grain imports from the United States and South America posed new trouble. And generally, imports in multiple sectors rose.⁶ “We import half our food,” complained Dilke in his 1890, *Problems of Greater Britain*, “we import the immense masses of raw material which are essential to our industry.”⁷

Britain’s declining competitiveness can be seen by comparing relative shares of world manufacturing output (see Table 4.1). During the height of British hegemony, Britain’s manufacturing output constituted 19.9 percent of the world’s total, creeping up to 22.9 percent in 1880. While its share only slightly declined to 18.5 percent in 1900, it fell to 13.6 in 1913. Most importantly, the US and Germany increasingly took greater shares. By 1900,

the US had already surpassed Britain. By 1913, Germany had too. Relative decline is also evident in Thompson’s index of “leading sector share,” which affirms the figures on world manufacturing output. This is a look not just at manufacturing but at a range of sectors. From this data, we find that Britain’s leading sector share continually declined, from .546 in 1850 to .430 in 1880 to .333 in 1890 and .146 by 1910.⁸

TABLE 4.1
Relative Shares of World Manufacturing Output, 1750-1913 (select years)

YEAR	UK	US	Germany
1750	1.9	.1	2.9
1800	4.3	.8	3.5
1830	9.5	2.4	3.5
1860	19.9	7.2	4.9
1880	22.9	14.7	8.5
1900	18.5	23.6	13.2
1913	13.6	32	14.8

Source: Kennedy, *Rise and Fall*, p. 149, 202

Yet, the numbers do not fully capture the real fear and sense of threat felt among Britons. In 1870, D. Grant wrote that the “dream” of England as the workshop of the world “is already a dream of the past...the singularity of our position has gone.” Mathews in *A Colonist on the Colonial Question* two years later warned “there seems to be reasonable grounds for fearing that England’s commercial supremacy may already be in danger.”⁹ Explicit worries about rivals became all the more common. Lloyd and Tebbitt’s 1880 pamphlet warned of America’s rise: “The danger, that our fancied alarmists of the seventeenth century might have foreseen, has actually come upon us; America, erewhile the home of the most feeble recorded civilizations or of mere savages and their quarries, now teems with vigorous nations... [...] Triumphant over the family of nations to which Rome and Greece gave birth, we are in danger of being devoured by our own offspring, of sinking into the position of a minor state and thus into nonentity, into a breeding-ground for emigrants.”¹⁰

We can now say that the speculation about the US registered by Lloyd and Tebbitt came true. The US did overtake Britain. But America’s period of hegemony, like Britain, did not last forever. The sun began set on America’s economic preponderance as early as the

1970s in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis.¹¹ What followed was a period of slow decline that had features not unlike Britain's decline. First was the initial recession that showed decreasing profits and even productivity. The average annual increase in labor productivity in the US from 1948 to 1973 was 2.8 percent, but from 1981 to 1986 it was only 1.2 percent. The rate of profit in America's traditional sectors like manufacturing declined similarly.¹² Second, the recession beginning in the 1970s and through the early 1980s was followed by a brief stint of optimism through 1990s. That optimism was reflected in some scholarship that declared that America was not in fact declining and that it was just taking the lead in other areas beyond its traditional manufacturing base: i.e. in service or technology and finance.¹³ This too was similar to Britain's decline: there had been in Britain a brief period of optimism after the initial recession. And as with the British case, the optimism about the US proved far too hopeful. Britain had also gained ground during its decline in finance and service; some have claimed that the turn to such industries is not a transcendence of decline but its dominant sign.¹⁴ In any case, as Robert Brenner shows, the apparent boom of the 1990s was but a bubble that already began to burst before the end of the decade.¹⁵

These domestic economic issues aside, America's economic standing in relative terms fell from the mid-1970s while competitors rose and continued to rise. Initially, beginning in the late 1960s even, the key competition came from Japan and Germany. Beginning in the late 1980s came the European Union as a whole, the rise of Russia as a potential economic monster, and then China. Various measures show this. One useful measure, not available for the British period, has to do with the largest multinational corporations. This data shows the beginnings of decline in the 1970s. In 1956, 42 of the biggest 50 multinationals in the world were American. The rest of the world only had 8. By 1980, only 23 were American. The number of European firms was about equal. Throughout, the Japanese increased their number of firms in the top 50.¹⁶ Other data shows a continuation of the trend through the 1990s and into the 2000s. Non-American firms constituted nine of the ten largest electronics and electrical equipment manufacturers in the world; eight of the ten largest auto makers and utility companies (gas and electric); seven of the ten largest petroleum refiners; and six of the ten largest telecommunication companies. Half of the ten largest pharmaceutical firms were non-American too. And of the top one hundred corporations in the world in 2000, as ranked by foreign-held assets, only 23 were American. Furthermore, "Together, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and the

Netherlands, with a combined gross domestic product (GDP) seven-tenths that of the United States, had forty; Japan had sixteen. During the 1990s, the share of U.S. multinationals in the foreign sales of the world's one hundred largest multinationals decreased from 30 to 25 percent; the share of EU-based companies increased from 41 to 46 percent."¹⁷

Measures regarding shares of the world economy are similarly informative. In 1950 the United States supplied half of the world's gross product; in 2002 it only supplied 21 percent. Sixty percent of manufacturing production in the world in 1950 came from the US, only 25 percent in 1999. Studies using somewhat different measures arrive at the same conclusion. In 1999, the US contributed only 28 percent to world GDP, while the European Union had 30 percent of the total. Japan was only 12 percent and China's only 4 percent, but East Asia (excluding Japan) was the world's fastest growing economy since the late 1990s.¹⁸ By 2007, *The Economist* magazine smashed any hope of an American return to world economic power. "Come on number one," the title of the piece read, "your time is up."¹⁹ In 2004, the Institute for International Economics (which included on its board prominent economists and policy-makers like Paul Volcker and Larry Summers) had already determined that "the United States is no longer the world's dominant economic entity."²⁰ The Institute's report also listed three key "structural challenges" that the US was facing and would continue to face in the future. First, the "advent of an expanded European Union with an economy as large as America's and a single money that provides the first rival to the dollar since it became the world's key currency." Second, "the meteoric rise of China (with India perhaps coming in its wake)." And third, "the evolution toward an East Asian economic bloc that could create a tripolar world economy, with significant geopolitical as well as economic implications for the United States."²¹ In 1997, an astute report from the CIA registered the same concerns and anticipated the possibility that China and Europe form a rival bloc and perhaps exclude the United States: "As East Asian economies--particularly China--grow, Europe will find its economic interests shifting toward that area. We anticipate growing trade and investment between these two regions."²² None of this even refers to other related economic problems: not least America's almost interminably increasing trade deficit since the 1970s.

NEW IMPERIALISMS

In sum, just as Britain experienced decline in the late nineteenth century, so too did the United States one hundred years later. This means that both states have undergone the same larger cycles: hegemonic ascent, maturity, and decline. We have already seen that the first two phases, hegemonic ascent and maturity, each correlated with certain imperial dynamics and forms. But did the hegemonic decline phase also have imperial correlates?

Britain's New Imperialism

Most historians of the British empire would agree that, coincident with Britain's relative hegemonic decline, was a shift in Britain's imperial practices, constituting what some have referred to as a "new imperialism." The idea of such a shift is deeply embedded in British imperial historiography and was not questioned until Robinson and Gallagher's seminal article on the "imperialism of free trade." On the one hand, Robinson and Gallagher were suspicious of the notion that there was a new imperialism at the end of the nineteenth century. In their view, England had been continuously imperialistic throughout the century. On the other hand, Robinson and Gallagher's overarching point must be clear. Their claim was that British imperialism was continuous at one level but discontinuous on another. Specifically, Britain was continuously imperialistic, but what changed the *mode* or *form* of imperialism. Britain in the mid-century preferred informal imperialism, but during the late nineteenth century – concomitant with its relative decline – the British state tended to replace informal with *formal* modes.²³

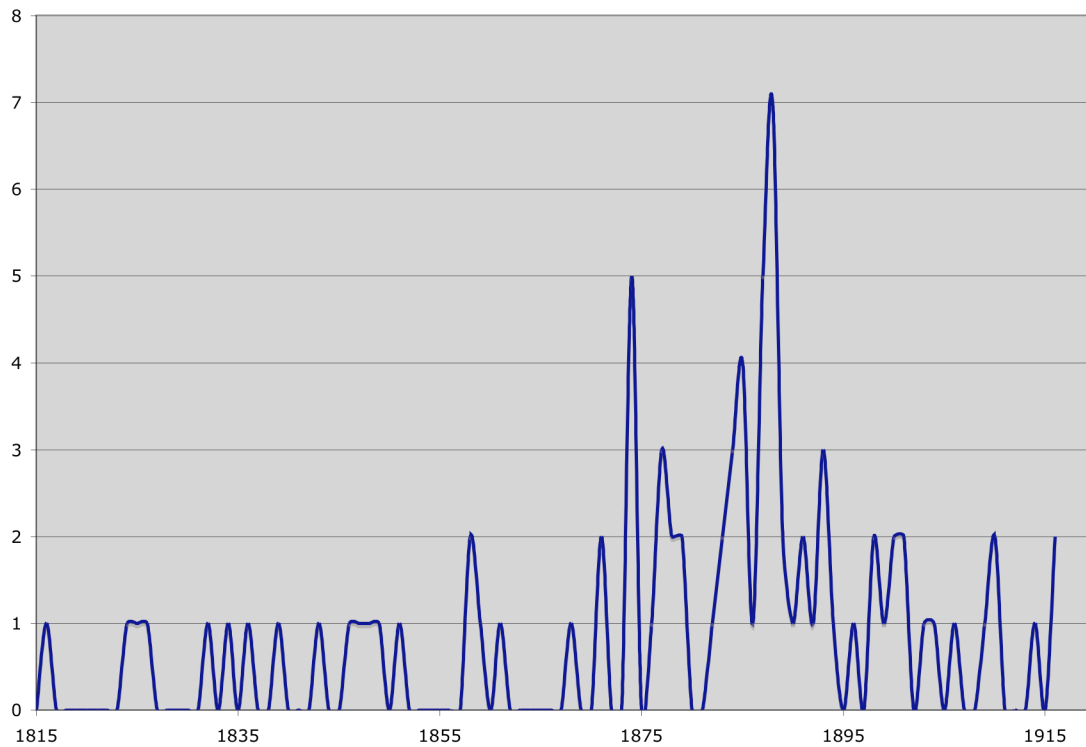
That there was a shift from informal to formal modes of imperialism, therefore, constitutes a key aspect of Britain's new imperialism. In fact, many of the areas that Britain had previously declined to colonize during its period of hegemony were later put under direct British control. As seen in an earlier chapter, for instance, the British state had received multiple offers of cession in the 1860s from chiefs in Fiji, and H.M. Government turned them down. Lord Carnarvon, Parliamentary under-secretary, had said in 1859 about those offers: "it is painful to refuse but there must be a limit somewhere to our protecting and governing duties..."²⁴ Yet, in 1874, Britain took a turn and decided to annex the islands. The same Lord Carnarvon who had been against annexation in the late 1860s was one of the key supporters of annexation in 1874. He declared in the House of Commons on July 17 of that year: "...England has a mission to extend her policy of annexation in this part of the world...[...]...it is the feeling of Her Majesty's Government that they cannot decline the

duty of accepting these Islands.”²⁵ Something similar happened in Egypt. Palmerston had previously rejected the idea of taking Egypt as a colony. “We want to trade with Egypt and to travel through Egypt but we do not want the burden of governing Egypt....Let us try to improve all these countries by the general influence of our commerce, but let us abstain from a crusade of conquest.” Yet in 1882 British forces entered the territory, defeated Egyptian forces in the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir, and subsequently remained. Furthermore, while the 1865 Parliamentary Select Committee had warned against extensions of British sovereignty over West African territories, by the 1880s this policy “was in ruins.”²⁶ In 1884 Britain announced various protectorates along the Bights of Biafra and Benin, over Niger Delta states, and eventually over the entire coast of what the British called the Oil River States (all of which later formed the basis for Nigeria). Similarly, in the East where clientelism had previously been the rule, the British declared protectorates over Somaliland (1887) and, with the help of Frederick Lugard’s East Africa Company, over Buganda (1894). Britain also took greater responsibility over Sarawak whereas it had denied it before, as the Foreign Office in 1888 took charge of its external affairs.

In all these areas, the policy of hands-off became one of hands-on, as formal rule was extended over areas previously rejected or areas where informal imperialism had been the rule. But the British state also went further by intensifying or extending its control over other areas and regions beyond those that had been previously turned down. In South Africa, Britain took the Transvaal as a colony in 1877 and in 1879 took Zululand. From 1877 through the early 1890s it declared protectorates over Somaliland, Matabeleland (and the areas later forming Rhodesia), and Nyasaland. In what would become Malaysia in Southeast Asia, Britain established the Residency system (1874), slowly extended its influence through the region, and eventually constructed the Federated Malay States (1896). It further established a protectorate over Brunei (1888), seized Burma as a colony in 1886, and sent British advisors to Thailand to help direct its financial and economic policies.²⁷ And in the Pacific, besides seizing Fiji, Britain also extended its rule over New Guinea (1884) and the Cook Islands (1881), while establishing the High Commission of the Western Pacific in 1877 to extend its control over the small islands of Gilbert, Ellice, the Soloman Islands, and the Pitcairn group, while further sending advisors to the monarchs of Tonga and Samoa. In short, there was both a shift away from informal strategies and towards formal rule and also an extension and intensification of political influence. The number of new colonies itself

shows the trend. As Figure 1 reveals, the number of new territories directly annexed by Britain increased markedly in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

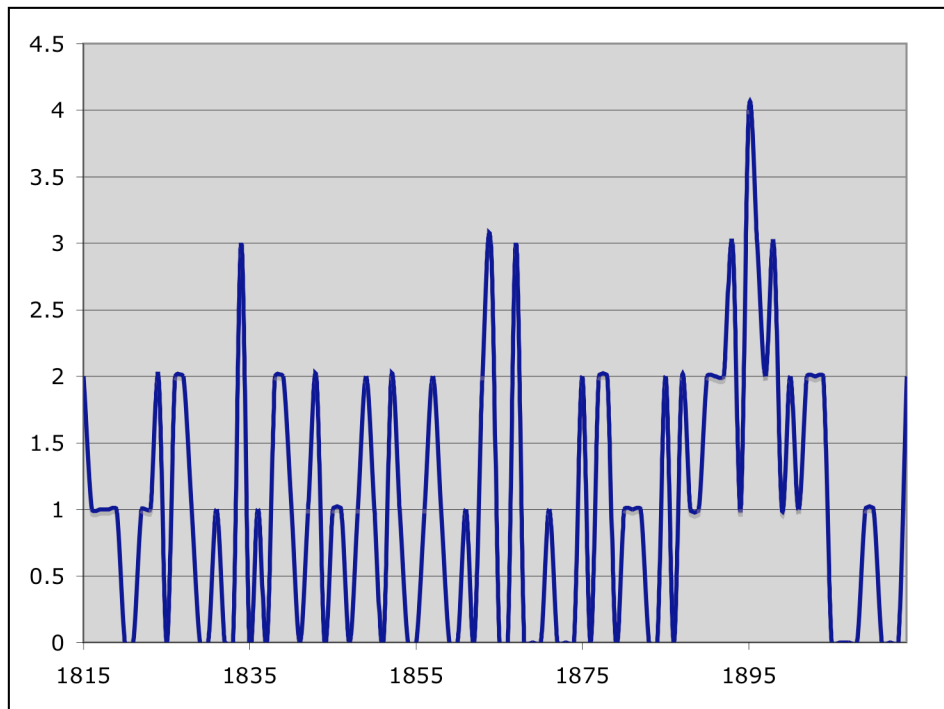
Figure 4.1
British Formal Annexations, 1815-1920



There is another sense in which Britain's imperialism shifted. Attendant with the extension or intensification of political control over peripheral areas was increased militaristic aggression. Of course, the British state had never been shy in using its military during its period of hegemony. The Crimean war, the suppression of the Indian Mutiny, the use of gunboats in Latin America and along the African coast – all of these manifested Britain's willingness to send troops and boats afar. But the late century brought with it new military ventures. A look at the number of military interventions initiated over the course of the century shows a higher amplitude and, perhaps more importantly, a greater frequency during Britain's period of decline compared with the previous period (see Figure 4.2). From 1885 to 1889, British forces engaged in intermittent small wars with Arab slave traders in Nyasaland. From 1887 to 1888, an expedition in West Africa shelled the Yonni tribe. In 1890 British squadrons attacked the Sultan of Vitu north of Zanzibar, responding to the

murders of Europeans in the area. In 1887 the British warred with the Zulus; from 1890 to 1897 British forces put down revolts in Matabeleland and Mashonaland. The 1885 attack on Khartoum, the 1877-78 Kaffir War and the 1878-1880 Anglo-Afghan war, and the Boer War are but a handful of other examples of Britain's militarism. In some cases this use of force was related to the new territorial drive. Annexing Burma, for example, involved a war of conquest employing a military force of at least 25,000. But Britain's new militarism was also deployed in territories that were not subdued for colonial rule; that is, occurring outside Britain's colonial boundaries.

Figure 4.2
 Number of British Military Interventions (deployment of troops or ships)
 outside Imperial Borders



Given all of these trends, scholars who have claimed that the end of the nineteenth century marked a new imperialism – despite Robinson and Gallagher’s qualifications – can be forgiven. There was indeed a shift in Britain’s imperialism; a change in its form, extent, and intensity. To be clear, this was not a shift towards imperialism and away from anti-imperialism. It was not a change from a lack of imperial power to exertions of power. It was a change in the modalities of imperial power, their extent and intensity. It was marked by a

new aggression; a greater willingness to blatantly use military power or otherwise establish direct political control. Rather than relying upon clientelist networks, Britain became more and more determined to replace with them with direct rule. Nor was this new imperialism restricted to the whims of the political party in power. For decades prior, the Liberal Party had portrayed itself as the most ardent supporters of free trade; hence, ostensibly, the most fervent anti-imperialists. Yet, in many respects Gladstone's Liberal Government was just as imperialistic as Disraeli's Conservative government. It was Gladstone's government, after all, which initiated the annexation of territories in West Africa, Fiji, and Malaysia.²⁸ This in itself might be one additional marker of Britain's new imperial aggression.

Still, there is a final feature to Britain's new imperialism: a shift in discourse and imperial consciousness. We have seen already that mid-Victorian Britons did not utter "empire" consistently or frequently. When they did utter it, they did not typically associate it with a formal overseas empire consisting of foreign lands and peoples around the globe. This changed in the latter part of the century. It became more common to associate "empire" with all of Britain's overseas domains, not just with Wales or Scotland.²⁹ When J. Snape, Councillor of Salford, gave a lecture on "The Trade of the British Empire" to the Conservative Club in 1882, he included under the rubric "empire" Britain's overseas possessions in the Americas and Asia: "We, who inhabit these little islands, are very apt to form insular prejudices and opinions, and to forget that from these isles is governed the mighty British Empire – which comprises a fourth of the population of the globe – for we must remember that although these islands only possess a population of 35,000,000 we also are a part and parcel of that empire which comprises India...Ceylon...Canada... Australia...the West Indies, South Africa...New Zealand...and various other similar possessions."³⁰ An atlas on the "Geography of the British Empire" by Theodore Johnson in 1876 defined the "British Empire" to include "the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, with the numerous foreign possessions, situated in nearly every part of the world, called Colonies and Dependencies."³¹ Along with this shift in meaning came a shift in emotional investment. Beginning in the 1870s or so, "more and more people in Britain seem to have become aware of the Empire as an entity, possibly as a source of problems, possibly a source of pride." The term *empire* acquired a "deeper moral significance and a greater emotive force" than before.³² Finally, the extent of discourse about empire also changed. The number of articles using the phrase the "British Empire" in the *London Times*

increases in the late nineteenth century, with only one comparable peak around 1855 (see Figure 2.2, previous chapter).

AMERICAN AGGRESSION RESURGENT

Has the United States undergone a similar shift in its imperial activities amidst its period of decline? On the one hand, if there was an American counterpart to Britain's new imperialism, we might expect to find the United States doing exactly what Britain did: that is, becoming more aggressive not only in terms of militarization but also in the form of annexing new territory. Just as Britain showed a tendency away from informal imperialism and towards formal imperialism, we would expect the US to have done the same during its period of decline. On the other hand, there is good reason to think that an American counterpart to Britain's new imperialism – if there is a counterpart at all – would not take the form of colonization. As seen in a previous chapter, the global context changed significantly in the twentieth century. Especially after the 1960s, it no longer became possible for any state to annex new territories as formal colonies. Even if the American state did become more imperialistic during its period of decline, we would not expect it to come in the same form in which Britain's came. We would not expect the United States to grab new territories as colonial domains.

What, then, would be a reasonable American counterpart to Britain's new imperialism, given the changed global context of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century? One indicator of a new American imperialism would not be a shift from informal imperialism to formal imperialism but simply an expansion or intensification of informal imperialism. Rather than covert operations or using financial aid to realize its goals, we would expect the US to show greater willingness to use military force or deploy other more direct mechanisms of power such as temporary occupations, displays of military force, or actual uses of military force. We would also expect the sheer frequency and amplitude of such exercises in imperial power to have heightened during the period of decline compared with America's period of hegemony. This would reveal an expansion or increase in its imperial practices, thereby serving as a reasonable parallel to Britain's new imperialism. Shifting from covert operations to direct military interventions, or adding temporary occupations or more forceful interventions to the informal mechanisms of money and aid, could reasonably be said to represent a greater willingness on the part of the US to act

imperial during its period of economic decline, just as Britain did in the late nineteenth century.

Some scholars have taken America's invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003 as a sign of such a new imperialism precisely. To be sure, it represented a novel use of imperial power. The occupation of Iraq was probably closer to formal colonialism than anything the US had done since its seizure of the Japanese mandated territories. The "provisional government" was a colonial state of sorts: the US claimed sovereignty over Iraq and controlled legislation. Of course, this was not exactly colonialism in the old-style. The occupying government was still "provisional," with little sense that it would continue for decades or centuries as old-style colonialism did. This likely reflected the global climate that had developed since the 1960s: it may be justifiable to temporarily occupy a country in the name of "nation-building," but hardly imaginable for a state to announce an indefinite usurpation of national sovereignty and resinscribe old-world colonialism. The point, however, is that there was something new in America's invasion and occupation of Iraq, at least in relation to America's foreign activities during its period of hegemonic maturity. The Vietnam war was the major military intervention of America's hegemonic period. It was indeed a massive event, demanding nearly a decade of commitment. But it was not an occupation demanding direct control over foreign territory. Iraq in this sense was more ambitious. Not only did it demand a war and continued military operations, it also demanded direct political control.

The other contemporaneous event, the occupation of Afghanistan and continuance of military operations, is similar: unlike interventions after WWII through the 1970s, it involved not only a military campaign but also a period of military rule and political control. Both Iraq and Afghanistan therefore suggest that the US had become more willing to act as an imperial power with a new determination and verve to directly and overtly manage the affairs of other countries. Compared with America's informal imperialism during its period of hegemony, they represent an expanded and intensified imperial aggression – a new American imperialism. In this sense it is indeed comparable to Britain's new imperialism.

Still, if Iraq and Afghanistan stand as the only similarities with Britain's new imperialism, they would not be intriguing. Unlike Britain's new imperialism, they would be comparably minimal: only two instances of increased imperialism compared with Britain's more general and expanded imperialism. Furthermore, they are easily attributable to a single event: September 11th. Without the accident of September 11th, there might not have been

the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. Even if they were not solely due to September 11th, they could easily be forgiven as a blip, reflecting the particular desires of Bush the Younger's administration. If that were the case, again there would be little similarity to Britain's new imperialism. As seen, Britain's new imperialism was not only extensive but also a consistent tendency across successive ministries and parties in power.

The fact, however, is that the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan were part of a larger trend. Rather than representing only a response to changing conditions after September 11th or the particularities of Bush the Younger's administration, they can be seen as the culmination of a resurgent imperialism that had already been unfolding years prior. For one thing, attacks on Iraq had been unleashed long before September 11th. The first war was initiated by Bush the Elder in 1991, and the Clinton administration over the next decade continued it through multiple air strikes. In this sense, the war in Iraq was continuous from 1991 onward, and it began long before September 11th. This would suggest that America's assaults on Iraq are not reducible to responses to a contingent event, particular presidential personalities or specific neoconservative ideologies. Second, and just as importantly, the United States during its period of economic decline had been adopting a more aggressive and imperialistic approach to other areas in the world besides Iraq. A new imperialism was unleashed in the latter part of the twentieth century, and Iraq was not the only instance.

The initial indications of a new American imperialism surfaced in the early 1980s, a time when America's economic decline in the previous decade had become more and more palpable and associated international challenges – the Iranian Revolution, the oil crisis, declining confidence in the U.S. dollar – had emerged.³³ In 1983, President Ronald Reagan authorized a force that ultimately totaled 7,000 troops to invade the island of Grenada. The force defeated the local People's Revolutionary Army and Militia and, within days, established control over Grenada's 100,000 inhabitants. This intervention was small and swift: forty-five Grenadians were killed and only eighteen U.S. personnel lost their lives. But the event is nonetheless significant in several respects. For one, it was the first use of American combat troops in the Caribbean in almost twenty years and the first major use of military force abroad since the Vietnam War.³⁴ The invasion of Grenada potentially marked a return to America's pre-hegemonic days when it had repeatedly invaded small Latin American, Caribbean, or Central American countries and utilized "gunboat diplomacy." To be sure, in 1988, President Bush authorized an invasion of Panama, deploying some 24,000 US troops

against a modest 6,000 force constituting the Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF). This was an even larger intervention than Grenada, even though the PDF did not constitute formidable foe. Grenada marked the first major use of force since Vietnam, but Panama was the *largest* military engagement of U.S. forces by that time since Vietnam.³⁵

Grenada and Panama represented only two of other uses of force by the US in the hemisphere. In 1993, President Clinton ordered US ships to embargo Haiti; in 1994 he decided to use 20,000 US troops to occupy the country. The last US troops did not leave Haiti for another six years. And later, in 2004, US troops returned for yet another occupation. There were also troop deployments to Columbia, Bolivia and Peru. Covert tactics, typical of America's hegemonic period, no doubt persisted. Reagan's support of the *contras* in Nicaragua is well-known. But the foregoing deployments suggest a greater willingness to directly and overtly intervene into the hemisphere to a degree arguably unmatched in the period when the US enjoyed unqualified global economic dominance. During the entire period from 1946 to 1982, there had been only *one* major US operation in the region (the Dominican Republic in 1965).

While all such operations remained within the region of America's traditional sphere of influence, there were various other deployments of American military power in the period in other parts of the world too. The 1980s saw interventions not only into Panama, Grenada, and Haiti but also small troop deployments to Chad, Sinai, Egypt, Libya, the Persian Gulf, and Lebanon. The 1990s did not stop the trend. Besides the attack on Iraq in 1991 and continued strikes thereafter, the US sent troops to Somalia, Kuwait, Zaire, Bosnia, Croatia, Haiti, Sudan, and Nigeria. The US used military power twice in the Balkans and sent troops for an occupation mission, leading some scholars to call Clinton's presidency an "imperial presidency."³⁶ In light of this information, claims by the likes of Arrighi and Wallerstein, who argue that the early 1980s mark a "drastic change in US [foreign] policies" ring true.³⁷

Some systematic data can help. One source is the report of a blue-ribbon commission, appointed to consider America's national security policy in 1999. The report shows that during the decade of the 1990s alone, the United States had embarked upon about four times as many military operations as had since the late 1940s. To this we must add the interventions in the 1980s and those after 2000, including Iraq, Afghanistan, and Haiti, among others.³⁸ Admittedly, the commissions' information is not detailed. It does not offer a breakdown of covert as opposed to overt operations, or other information on the

actual types of military operations that are referred to. Therefore, more in-depth data collected from various sources – including lists from government documents and reports – can help clarify. The basic question is: did the United States deploy its troops abroad to a greater extent during its period of decline than during its period of hegemony? If we count all of the overt military operations involved the deployment of US troops (including air raids and naval operations) from the period 1945 to 2003, we see indeed that more interventions occurred in the period beginning 1980 – i.e. the period attendant with America’s economic decline – than the period from 1946 to the 1970s (see Table 4.2). In other words, there was indeed a rise in America’s willingness to use force and/or send its troops abroad in the decline period than in the period of hegemonic maturity – a higher frequency and amplitude in the number of military interventions initiated. And as with Britain’s case, this was not specific to any particular party. Military force was unleashed during President Clinton’s administration just as it was during President Reagan’s, President George Bush, Sr.’s, and President George W. Bush’s administrations.

Table 4.2
No. of Military Interventions by the United States, 1946-2003

YEARS	HISTORICAL PHASE	Number
1946-1980	Hegemonic Maturity and Beginning of Decline	25
1981-2003	Decline	46

Regarding this finding, a few further points demand elaboration. First, the figures represent the raw number of interventions initiated. It does not refer to the duration of interventions. Still, duration might have more to do with other logics or factors besides historical phases. It might, for example, reflect the amount of domestic or local resistance to the intervention, the relative amount of military resources available, or various other events. What matters is the *decision* to employ force; the decision on the part of the government to reach and act beyond its borders – either by the deployment of troops, the use of air strikes,

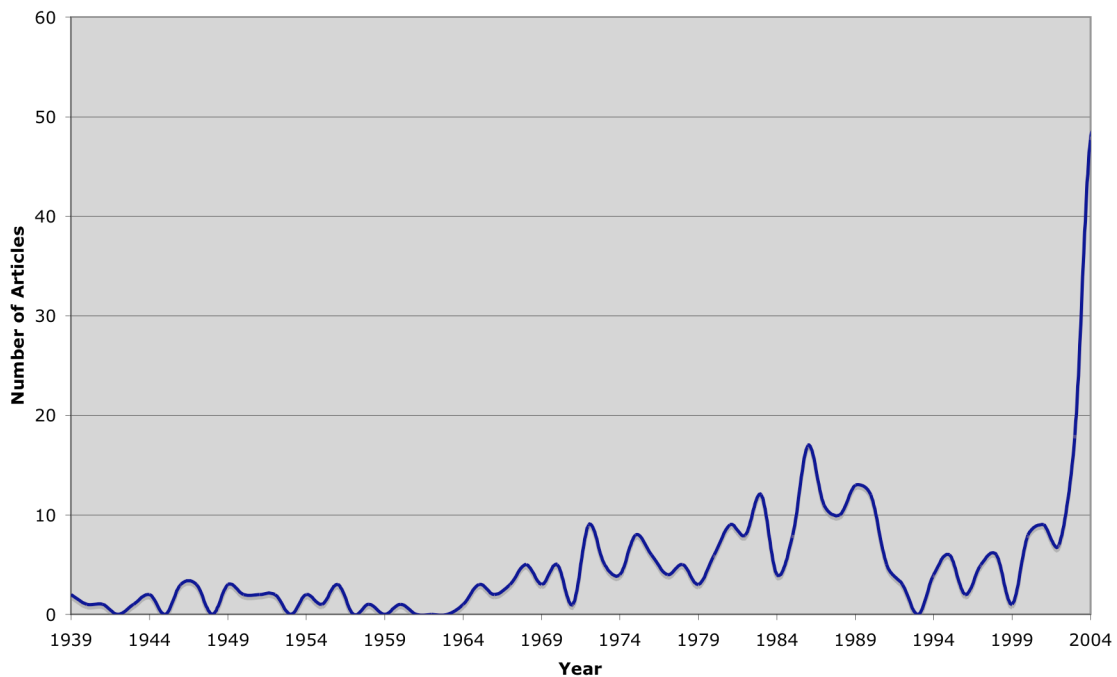
sending military support, or temporary military occupation. Second, the figures do not show the actual number of troops deployed. If the US used less and less troops in the decline period, despite the raw number of actual discrete interventions, it might not represent a significant change or greater willingness to resort to military power. Still, there are two reasons why troop numbers are not necessarily as informative as raw numbers of discrete interventions. Greater troop numbers might, for example, reflect the amount of local resistance to the intervention, the relative amount of military resources available, or various other events. If the United States military first intervenes and later escalates troops or resources, does this reflect the hegemonic status of the United States or simply a contingent military strategy for winning the war or unexpected local resistance? Furthermore, comparing troop numbers over time would not be informative due to the historical development of military technology. The use of one thousand ground troops in the 1953 might not be comparable to the use of one thousand troops in 1983, because the advances in military infrastructure means that less troops might be necessary in the latter intervention, even if the troops were sent for the same kind of mission (and even if the proportion of troops to local population were the same). But if we *do* count troops deployed, we find that the US employed greater military force during its decline period than during its period of hegemonic maturity. From 1946 to 1980, a span of thirty-four years, American troops used in military interventions totaled about 882,000. This includes Vietnam. Alternatively, during the smaller time span of twenty-five years, from 1981 to 2005, the total number of American troops deployed in military interventions – by even the most conservative estimate – reached 1,425,809.

Table 4.3
Type of Imperialistic Activities Over Time, 1907-2003

YEARS	HISTORICAL PHASE	ACTIVITY TYPE		TOTAL
		% (No.)		
		Expansionist- Aggressive	Policing	
1946-1980	Hegemonic Maturity and Beginning of Decline	25 (6)	75 (19)	100 (25)
1981-2003	Decline	54 (25)	56 (21)	100 (46)

The final point is that, besides the frequency and amplitude of imperialistic activity, the *type* of imperialistic activity in the two periods is also notable (Table 4.3). I coded all the different types of activities into two main categories: 1) expansionist-aggressive, and 2) policing. The first category includes military occupations, official wars, the deployment of troops for combat, and air strikes. The second category, “policing,” includes the use of naval, air, or ground troops for evacuation, protection of citizens, humanitarian assistance, election supervision, patrolling, and military advising or support.³⁹ If we examine their distribution over time, we find that the interventions during the decline period are indeed different from the imperialistic activities during America’s period of hegemonic maturity. During America’s period of hegemonic maturity, the relatively few instances of imperialistic activity that the United States had in fact initiated tended towards the policing character. But from 1981 to 2003, there was a decline in policing activities and a corresponding increase in the proportion of aggressive-expansionist activities. In sum, not only has the United States increased its imperialistic activity in terms of frequency and amplitude during its period of economic decline, its imperialistic activities have become more and more aggressive.⁴⁰

New York Times: "American Empire"



The similarity to Britain's new imperialism should already be clear. Just as Britain embarked upon a new imperialism during its period of decline, so too did the United States during its similar period – i.e. before Iraq and Afghanistan became the object of concern in 2003. But there is another similarity. We have seen that, attendant with Britain's new imperialism was a rise in *talk* about the British "empire." American discourse of empire appears to have proliferated also during its period of decline (see Figure). The number of articles containing the phrase "American Empire" in the *New York Times* is small during America's period of hegemony, peaking at only three articles per year. However, a jump in the number of articles occurs in the late 1960s and carries through the 1980s. There was a slight dip in the early 1990s but the number of articles picks up again in the mid-1990s and builds up to 2003. Clearly, talk of American "empire" jumped after key events like Vietnam and September 11th, 2003. But the rise in discourse was not at all restricted to those events. As in Britain, the discourse of empire in the United States became a more prominent feature during the entirety of the decline period than during the previous period of hegemonic maturity.

EXPLAINING BRITAIN'S NEW IMPERIALISM

While the foregoing suggests that both Britain and the U.S. embarked upon new imperialisms during their respective periods of decline, a final question remains: is decline systematically associated with the new imperialisms? If so, how? We cannot assume the answers to these questions. The coincidence between decline and the new imperialisms could very well be just that: a coincidence. A closer examination into the driving forces behind the new imperialisms is necessary. We must ask, what drove the new imperialisms?

Regarding the British case, answers have already been given by numerous scholars. Scholars have examined and debated the causes of the new imperialism for at least a century. The sociologist, and vocal anti-imperialist, Herbert Spencer was among the first to tackle the issue. In the 1880s, he wrote tracts portentously lamenting the early signs of Britain's new imperialism, theorizing it as the result of a new militant nationalism. Not long after Spencer, J.A. Hobson's offered the first economic theory of imperialism, claiming that British imperialism resulted from the rise of finance capital and the needs of financiers. These theories then paved the way for a range of others throughout the twentieth century. Spencer's themes were picked up in Schumpeter's *Imperialism and Social Classes*. Hobson's

theory set the conditions for Lenin's explanation of imperialism as the "highest stage of capitalism" and a variety of subsequent Marxist and Neo-Marxist theories.

Still, despite this vast literature, the evidence remains inconclusive. There has been little consensus on which factors best explain the dynamics of British imperialism; no agreement on any single "theory" that can account for Britain's new aggressiveness. Reviewing decades of debate over the so-called "Hobson-Lenin" thesis of imperialism, for example, the British imperial historian C.C. Eldridge concluded: "clearly, the 'theory of Capitalist Imperialism' has never been really *proved*."⁴¹ The same could also be said of the other classic formulations. From Spencer through Lenin, various theories were proposed but the debate remains unresolved. This is partially because historians testing, revising, or promulating the different theoretical perspectives have looked at particulars rather than general patterns. Some scholars have adjudicated the different theories by looking at particular cases like the scramble for Africa or the annexation of Fiji but not all colonial annexations. Therefore, while some might find that the Hobson-Lenin thesis helps explain why Britain invaded and occupied Egypt, others refute the thesis on the grounds that it does apply to the annexation of colonies in the Pacific.

The ongoing debates suggest that a different and more manageable approach would be to look for a variety of factors that might have combined in various ways or to different degrees. In other words, rather than look for a single explanation we must look at broad contextual factors that together constituted a certain climate or environment of the time. We can then consider how these factors translated into specific instances of imperial aggression. Critical here is that the factors pinpointed must be particular to this historical period, compared with the mid-Victorian period when Britain's imperialism was different. Locating that particularity could then help us better understand why Britain unleashed a *new* imperialism only in this historical movement, as opposed to the mid-century. In other words, we need to consider what was new or different about these years that might have helped unleash the new imperialism. We will now see three broad factors: economic crisis and competition, intensified geopolitical rivalry, and peripheral crises.

The New Context

Clearly, one new feature of the period was economic. Hegemonic decline, after all, was an economic characteristic of the time. Still, two economic issues in particular warrant attention

if we are to better understand the new imperialism. The first is the domestic situation. Britain's loss of economic supremacy was accompanied by bouts of depression marked by falling profit rates and unemployment. These had sociopolitical implications, for the ailing economic situation was accompanied by periodic upswells of popular discontent and protest. The economic crash of 1866 was a portent of the decades of come. It led to high unemployment, the loss of middle class fortunes, and increased social tensions. A public demonstration in 1867 raised the specter of the "mob" among British elites who likened the situation of 1848 Paris. Calls for strong government reactions surfaced among the well-to-do and the political elite who feared that the "flood-gates to anarchy" were being opened.⁴² John Godfrey's speech on "The means of preventing the downfall of the British empire" is indicative of this notion. Making a speech in 1882 as "President of the Patriotic Association of Marylebone," he complained about the "evils by which we are surrounded and imperiled. We put before you...the vital proposition for your decision; that, by the misgovernment of our present rulers, our power, our greatness, our character abroad, are being ruined; our trade destroyed; and at home, our country disgraced by a state of lawlessness, anarchy, assassination, and crime, causing in the wide civilized world an expression of contempt and loud reproach for the loss of that energy, power, and practical action of the old English character, by which we used to grapple with and conquer every danger and difficulty."⁴³

Besides economic crises at home, secondly, were economic interests abroad. We have already seen that Britain's slow decline did not just mean economic troubles at home, it also meant new threats to Britain's overseas economic dominance. Part of the reason why Britain faced domestic economic troubles in the first place was that Germany and the US, and even France and Russia to some extent, were increasing their market shares and productive capacities. Of importance here, then, is how this competition was registered among business circles and statesmen. Investigations by the Royal Commission on the "Depression of Trade and Industry" in the mid-1880s, for example, concluded that surplus production, low prices, and weak investment opportunities were the culprits for Britain's new economic woes. Most representatives from industry blamed foreign competition rather than rising workers' wages. The view was that rival countries' agricultural and rising manufacturing production was keeping prices and profits low.⁴⁴ Other observers repeatedly worried that those countries' growth in production, coupled with Britain's free trade orientation, had made Britain increasingly dependent upon imports. Putatively, this

economic competition was worsened by rivals' protectionist tariffs.⁴⁵ The United States had been maintaining high tariffs since the Civil War. There were substantial tariff hikes across Europe, with increases occurring in Russia, Spain, Italy, Germany, and France between 1877 and 1882 and continuing through the 1890s.⁴⁶ These tariffs lessened investment opportunities in Europe, as the Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade and Industry noted in 1886.⁴⁷ John Morris likewise complained in 1885: "Now, what is the matter with England? – Depression of trade at home and loss of our legitimate controlling influence abroad. [...] If all nations had been willing to adopt the principles of free trade, there can be no doubt that it would have been beneficial to England, and probably to the whole world; but...the fact remains that other nations have not done so, and therefore it has not been beneficial, at any rate to us."⁴⁸ In this context, it is not surprising that British capitalists and merchants became increasingly fearful. As Hynes notes, at the end of the 1870s, the commercial confidence of previous decades "were replaced by feelings of uncertainty, even of insecurity, and many merchants began to fear that Britain's commercial supremacy was no longer something they could take for granted."⁴⁹

The new economic climate was radically new, at least relative to previous decades. But there were another transformation in this period: the changing geopolitical landscape. The rise of rival economic powers was attendant not only with economic threats but also the rise of new political and security threats.⁵⁰ One such threat had to do with the European continent. As seen, during the period of hegemonic maturity, Britain helped to construct a balance of power in Europe. This had enabled Britain to avoid massive military commitments on the continent. But with the Franco-Prussian war, the subsequent unification of Prussia and Italy the previous balance of power was unsettled. Disraeli's response in 1871 to the Franco-Prussian war is informative of this new factor:

It is no common war, like the war between Prussia and Austria, or like the Italian war in which France was engaged in some years ago; nor is it like the Crimean War. This war represents the German revolution, a greater political event than the French revolution of last century. [...] Not a single principle in the management of our foreign affairs, accepted by all statesmen for guidance up to six months ago, any longer exists. There is not a diplomatic tradition which has not been swept away. You have a new world, new influences at work, new and unknown objects and dangers with which to cope [...] The balance of power has been entirely destroyed, and the country which ... feels the effects of this great change most, is England.⁵¹

The European threat coincided with potential dangers further afield too. First, America's economic ascendance in the wake of the Civil War, conjoined with the unification of Prussia and Italy, portended a world in which size was increasingly important for power. An "era of big states" loomed on the horizon, and "little England" would have to respond. Hence Froude fretted in 1870 that England, were she to lose her colonies, would "sink as Holland had sunk into a community of harmless traders?"⁵² Second, and related, the new emerging powers were not only unifying but also expanding overseas. France showed signs of a revived interest in colonial acquisitions. It took Tahiti in 1880, made Tunis a protectorate in 1881, approached Tonkin in 1882, and seized part of Madagascar in 1884. In addition, as Germany expanded its productive base, it too sent capital abroad while later capturing its own colonies.⁵³ The United States after the Civil War was likewise making its presence felt in the Caribbean and Latin America. Disraeli worried in 1872 that the US was even "throwing lengthening shades over the Atlantic, which mix with European waters."⁵⁴ Similarly, during the 1860s and 1870s, Russian forces advanced towards Afghanistan, resulting in the establishment of a military mission in Kabul in 1878 and the military campaign in 1885 at Penjdeh.⁵⁵ It was likewise constructing railways in Central Asia.⁵⁶ Even Japan posed a potential new threat. Disraeli wrote to Lady Bradford in 1875: "I know not why Japan should not become the Sardinia of the Mongolian east. They are by far the cleverest of the Mongolian races."⁵⁷

The growing military power of rivals did not relieve the tensions. Germany's military strength was effectively displayed during the Franco-Prussian war. At first, some sectors in Britain were not so greatly alarmed, but suspicions of Germany's military intentions among the army, the navy, and the Foreign Office soon surfaced.⁵⁸ Russia's activities also posed some concern. Its advance on Afghanistan culminated with the establishment of a military mission in Kabul in 1878, and the 1885 clash between Russian and Afghan troops compelled Gladstone's government to make contingency plans for operations against Batum on the eastern shore of the Black Sea. That same year, the British army's capacities were put into question due to Gordon's humiliating defeat at Khartoum.⁵⁹ Even Britain's naval prowess could no longer be taken for granted. It is true that Britain maintained its naval dominance in these years. The problem is that other states were slowly building up their naval capacities.⁶⁰ In terms of first-class armored battleships,

France leaped from maintaining ten in 1865 to seventeen by 1870 and nineteen by 1903. The United States went from one in 1865 to six in 1900; Russia went from two in 1865 to fourteen in 1900; Germany from three in 1870 to twelve by 1903, and Japan rose from having none until 1900 when it acquired four.⁶¹ These developments alarmed strategists in Britain, who increasingly grew cautious if not worried. In 1879 a Royal Commission presided by Carnarvon produced a report worrying about imperial defence. Four years later, the strategist Philip Colomb feared that if Britain did not “keep command of the sea,” it “will be speedily blotted out from the list of great countries.”⁶²

These questions about Britain’s relative military power and its security were articulated with the economic threats. As rivals acquired more and more land and continued to raise tariffs, “how could British traders continue to operate in West Africa... if their goods were discriminated against by the French; or in Manchuria if it was ever enclosed by the colossal Russian tariff?”⁶³ The rival powers also posed a potential threat to Britain’s existing lines of trade and informal influence.⁶⁴ The 1879 Royal Commission investigation on the “defence of British possessions and commerce abroad” suggested that defense and commerce were inseparable. Locating thirteen key imperial trade routes (pointing especially to Carnarvon’s special idea of the importance of the route via the Cape if the Suez route to India were cut), the assumption was that if Britain no longer dominated the seas – or if its bases and security nodal points were vulnerable to attack – its commerce would be seriously threatened.⁶⁵ John Colomb added that England’s commerce was at risk closer to home and not just abroad. The rise of a militaristic European power could hit England’s global trade by targeting the English Channel:

Upon the freedom of communication the commercial existence of the empire depends. From this point of view, the greatest calamity which can befall this gigantic enterprise is that pressure from without which would threaten to cut off the greatest number of its communications. That danger may, any day, assume a very visible form in the shape of a powerful foreign fleet in the Channel. [...] For the reasons we have briefly given, it is evident that the safety of the Channel must be maintained...⁶⁶

In short, the rise of economic rivals brought potential geopolitical rivals, making for a radically new and threatening global field than the one Britain had been facing. “Great Britain,” portended Francis and Tebbitt in 1880, worrying about the rise of the United States and other powers, “must be prepared for hostile combinations in the future, far

exceeding in potency those whose fate our history recounts.”⁶⁷ It all constituted a situation in which Britain’s future economic and political dominance could no longer be assumed.

Still, there was another final new development in the late nineteenth century worth highlighting. This also has to do with political and economic issues but more precisely as they arose in the periphery, brought on by the very logics of informal imperial rule and the global trade that Britain had been overseeing. As seen in a previous chapter, Britain’s imperialism in the mid-Victorian period, when it fell short of formal annexation, nonetheless involved the creation of client states and collaborative regimes abroad. These client states and regimes helped Britain extend trade and maintain a network of security for that trade. It carried it with collaborative relations with indigenous rulers, flows of financial aid and new commercial relations with peripheral societies. It likewise entailed an influx of new actors to peripheral areas, as “subimperialists” like missionaries and settlers spread across Asia and Africa. The difficulty was that informal empire itself created new tensions and troubles in peripheral areas that might in turn demand new political interventions. The potential for conflict between, on the one hand, British proconsuls and capitalists, merchants and missions, settlers and enterprising explorers and, on the other hand, host populations and local rulers increased dramatically.

The political logic of informal rule itself carried the possibility for such conflict. British proconsuls, advisors, or enterprises established collaborative relations with local rulers, but local rulers or chiefs might become recalcitrant to British aims over time. “The danger of new friendly overtures with Natives,” recognized the parliamentary under-secretary in 1868, when confronted with suggestions to extend British informal influence over the Malaya states, “is that they always take them to mean more than they do.”⁶⁸ And proconsuls themselves might take initiatives unauthorized by London that could provoke further political tensions. The collaborative relations with one ruler or another might likewise provoke resentment or even incite aggression from neighboring rulers or rivals that always had their own designs. Such was the case, for example, in the Gold Coast region. British settlements there, Beecroft’s attempts to curb the slave-trading, and commercial trade with the Fanti all invoked the ire of the Fanti’s enemies (the Ashanti Confederation), which in turn precipitated clashes with British forces. Furthermore, the entry of settlers, missionaries, or capitalists under the rubric of informal rule could itself provoke conflict. In Fiji, a cotton boom in the early 1860s attracted European settlers and

missionaries which led to new social tensions; in one instance resulting in the murder of a Bishop by local groups that received wide attention in the London press.⁶⁹ Such social tensions were particularly likely to erupt across parts of Asia and Africa in the latter part of the nineteenth century, as improved technologies, transport, and better knowledge of foreign lands coupled with British informal influence brought more and more foreigners and locals into contact and possible conflict.⁷⁰

Informal empire also entailed the influx of financial aid or capital investment to new areas that ran the risk of disrupting local economies and contributing to social unrest or political disorder. Resentment from below could be unleashed, local rulers or princes might find themselves financially indebted, and the local rulers' capacities to maintain legitimate power (and therefore serve as effective clients to British overlords), could be undermined. In Burma, for instance, Britain's trade treaties in 1862 and 1867 with Prince Mindon compelled Mindon to impose high and "politically troublesome levels of direct taxation on his subjects" which, among other events, put the country into socioeconomic crisis by 1878.⁷¹ Similarly, in Egypt, various forces combined to create a crisis by 1881. The establishment of free trade in 1841 led to an influx of capital into the cotton industry by Levantine and European merchants, which in turn contributed to high levels of exploitation. At the same time, the Khedivate overborrowed from foreign sources. This led to his deposition, backed by Britain and France, and his replacement by a less than legitimate Tewfik. As a result, landlords, the military, and Muslim religious leaders led a wave of anti-foreign sentiment and proto-nationalist revolt.⁷² The potential for these scenarios around other parts of the world probably increased in the late nineteenth century not only because of Britain's informal political influence but also the increased export of British capital to peripheral regions.⁷³ As Edelstein's work showed, British capital exports rose from the 1850s to the 1870s and dramatically increased after the 1870s in response to the perceived lack of investment opportunities at home. While much of this was in Europe or the United States, other portions went to areas in the peripheral world outside Britain's formal empire.⁷⁴

Admittedly, not all of these problems were new. Britain had faced the threat of military rivals before, and it had always been concerned about maintaining security while simultaneously striving to maintain and expand its trade. It had also faced the potential for disorder in its informal (and colonial) empire before. But as Kennedy points out: "What was different now was that the relative power of the various challenger states was much

greater, while the threats seemed to be developing almost simultaneously.⁷⁵ In this sense, the world faced by Britain in the late nineteenth century was fundamentally different than during the mid-century. Britain's domestic economy experienced bouts of depression that hit home hard. Potential threats to the imperatives of capital and containment emerged from rival powers. And Britain's informal empire and free trade had generated the possibility for unrest and disorder in areas of strategic and economic concern.

Context to Causation

So how did this larger novel context serve to create Britain's new imperialism? To answer, we can look at some representative cases of Britain's new imperialism and see how the new factors worked in conjunction. The invasion of Abyssinia in 1867 is one such representative case, if only in the sense that it has been taken by some as a critical turning point. Admittedly, in some ways the invasion was not a marker of the new imperialism. British forces did not remain there and instead left behind an officially independent client rather than a colony. But it does stand as a turning point in other respects. Previously, Britain had maintained a relatively cautious approach to Africa, preferring informal rule to colonization. During the 1863 Ashanti War, British troops suffered bad losses that only added to the caution. And the 1865 Report of the Select Committee had called officially called for careful intervention into the region at best.⁷⁶ But the invasion of Abyssinia marked a turn, reversing the previous hesitation to intervene. It was also followed by a series of other new interventions into the region, first led by Disraeli (as seen earlier). In these ways, then, the Abyssinian invasion surely marked a radical turn. "The new phase of imperialism...was signaled by the Abyssinian Expedition. Forceful, deliberate, and chauvinistic, it was in such marked contrast to the inertia and hesitancy recently typical of attitudes to foreign and imperial affairs that it constituted a decisive break with the past."⁷⁷

So what compelled this "break with the past"? At least two factors combined. One had to do with events in the periphery brought on by informal empire. The pretext for the invasion, after all, was King Theodore's seizure of Europeans, including some diplomats and missionaries. And the British consul to the area, Walter Plowden, who had been attempting to expand trade, was killed in 1860 amidst disorder and unrest that had been sporadically erupting in the region. Clearly, King Theodore was a threat to British activity. Still, the intransigence of Theodore was not the sole factor. British activity had been minor relative to

other areas of British influence and HMG had been comparably indifferent to his activities. The question of whether to at all reappoint a British consul after Plowden had even been raised with some skepticism, for it might “involve us in complications...most desirable for the future to avoid.”⁷⁸ Besides the peripheral contingencies, therefore, two others must be added: the economic troubles experienced by Britain at home and the rising threats to Britain’s long-standing political global dominance by rising powers. The signs of Britain’s declining economic hegemony were recently posing serious trouble for the political elite. In May 1866 a wave of bankruptcies swept financial circles and the repercussions of “Black Friday” were felt all over the nation over the next years; the sudden decline of profits put the middle classes in an unexpected period of bad times; food prices rose; the London shipbuilding industry fell apart; and unemployment and poverty was wide-spread. The depression was seen as “one of the most painful and severe of the century” and culminated with rioting in Hyde Park following a huge demonstration of protest against the administration of Lord Derby.⁷⁹ Fears of “anarchy” among the upper classes proliferated in the wake of the riots.

This situation, compelled with the recent demonstrations of strength by Prussia’s advances, thereby led to a “need to unite the classes under the existing leadership” and to show the strength of the government against the rising unrest. According to the historian Freda Harcourt, when Disraeli’s government took over, and as the Reform Bill expanded the suffrage, a political solution emerged. Disraeli turned to militaristic aggression abroad and jingoistic discourse.⁸⁰ Invading Abyssinia became useful as a unifying tactic for restoring the governments’ popularity. By the same token, Abyssinia would serve for demonstrating to the populace that, despite the economic crisis and rising threats from competing powers, Britain still had muscle. “The idea of enhancing Britain’s imperial status was seized upon by Disraeli...as the obvious, indeed, the only, way of confirming Britain’s position as a great power in a rapidly changing world. He acted on the belief that the trappings of imperialism might have as wide an appeal in Britain. He sensed also that a show of aggression, if free from risk, would be popular, and that if it were to symbolize a renewal of past imperial splendour it would serve as a focus for the energies of the whole nation and provide a foundation for national unity.”⁸¹ Fittingly, after the battle, Northcote told Napier “Where we were considered the weakest of military nations we have shown ourselves the strongest...This expedition...will have effected as great an alteration in our position in the

eyes of Europe as the battle of Sadowa effected in the position of Prussia.”⁸² The popular press likewise basked in the glory of victory, constructing it as Britain’s “rehabilitation in the esteem of the world.”⁸³ While the failure of the previous Ashanti wars were not so highly popularized, the Abyssinian exploits were widely reported from a host of proud correspondents on the spot. *Lloyd’s* thus saw the Abyssinian Expedition as means for restoring “our old reputation for indomitable energy in the protection of our country in every part of the world.”⁸⁴ Conservative Party pamphlets later boasted: “the people of England are proud of belonging to a great country, and wish to maintain its greatness – they are proud of belonging an Imperial country.”⁸⁵ A commemorative medal marked the “national exultation’ over the victory that re-established Britain as a great power in the world.”⁸⁶

In short, what determined the new imperialism in the case of Abyssinia was the convergence of peripheral crisis and the changed economic context (however mediated through domestic crisis and sociopolitical logics). The socioeconomic crisis, along with the expansion of the suffrage and Britain’s recent military defeats, made jingoism and imperialism more attractive; political elites could gain electoral advantage by playing “the empire card.”⁸⁷ This was, in fact, the process attendant with many of Britain’s other militaristic ventures. Various military campaigns after the Abyssinia carried with it bouts of popular enthusiasm and jingoism, from the Ashanti campaign of 1874 to the Emin Pasha relief expedition of 1887-9 to the Boer War in 1899.⁸⁸ And in some cases, political elites made straightforward calculations about how interventions abroad might serve as an electoral tactic. In 1885, for example, the new secretary of state for India, Lord Randolph Churchill, calculated that strong response to French advances in Burma might prove popular with the electorate and prove a boon from Salisbury’s minority Conservative administration.⁸⁹ And as Green has shown, throughout the period, Conservatives often consciously tried to use imperialism to curb the electoral tide towards the Liberals.⁹⁰

The new discourse of empire here makes some sense. The “British Empire” and “Our Empire” became signs under which could be proudly gathered various social classes cum electorates whose economic situation was providing no such alternative sign.⁹¹ A pamphlet published in 1886, “The Strength and Weakness of the British Empire: Dedicated to the Working Men of England,” is suggestive. Written by an anonymous “Working Man,”

it beseeched its working-class workers to become more familiar with, and supportive, of the Empire while simultaneously urging them to disavow social unrest:

Working men of England. In the future you must be your own protectors; that is, you must protect yourselves from falling into disgrace by the action of the mob at any time. The recent riot at the west-end of London, February 8, 1886, gave you a slight proof of what has already been told you; behind the mob comes ruin and desolation. Genuine English working men would never behave in that manner....[...] Do your duty; work quietly and effectively for a united Empire and a united people; and those that come after you will bless and esteem your memory...⁹²

All of this suggests that domestic crises, along with the cynical manipulations of opinion inspired by the socioeconomic context, help account for the militaristic aspects of Britain's new imperialism. This was indeed part of the decline period; it was something new entirely. The healthy economic situation of Britain during mid-century had not brought such crises.

Yet, the domestic economic situation can hardly account for all of Britain's new imperialism. There were plenty of annexations that were not popularized after all. In other cases, in fact, the repeated bouts of economic depression, related sporadic social stirrings and subsequent nationalist militarism were not as important. Instead, other factors of the new context combined to lead Britain from a policy of hands-off to hands-on. Consider the occupation of Egypt in 1882. As with the case of Abyssinia, Egypt has been seen by historians as a critical turning point towards Britain's new imperialism and likewise a sort of "test case" for assessing different theories of imperialism.⁹³ The subsequent literature on the occupation by historians reveals multiple factors at work.

One was financial. British capital had been injected into Egypt during previous years. Prime Minister Gladstone himself had some financial stakes.⁹⁴ Another was peripheral crisis. While financial interests were at stake, what made intervention even more likely than before was the crisis brought on by social and political upheaval in the wake of stringent financial controls upon the Khedive. Both of these concerns thereby combined to unleash the invasion. "British policy was assertive not because policy-makers were in the pockets of the bond-holders, but because they recognized the need to defend Britain's substantial economic interests in Egypt, and because they thought that these could be secured by a quick and inexpensive strike...".⁹⁵ There was, though, an additional factor. This was geopolitical in combination with economic threats. In a context of emerging geopolitical competitors,

Egypt's Suez Canal remained vital. In the hands of a rival power, it would give that power an upper geographical hand. Of great worry here was French intervention. The French had long had eyes on Egypt and had financial investments there too.⁹⁶ Egypt in the hands of a rival would have also threatened to cut off Britain's critical trade with India. Gladstone noted: "for India the Suez Canal is the connecting link between herself and the centre of power – the centre of the moral, social and political power of the world." He added that the Canal was "the great question of British interest."⁹⁷ Finally, direct British control over Egypt was not only useful for keeping France in check and India's trade intact, it was only useful as a counterpoint to Russia's slow advance into the region. As Porter explains: "with Britain in Egypt not only would British gain advantage over France and greater security for the Suez Canal route to India but above all an important lever in negotiation with the Ottoman government to contain Russian expansion into Turkey and the eastern Mediterranean."⁹⁸

Other cases show the same factors at work in unleashing Britain's new imperialism, however in different combinations and to different degrees. In West Africa, for example, British expansion was partly driven by geopolitical threats, but economic competition was more clearly at stake. The need for new markets, for instance, had been a common call among merchants and manufacturers during the depression. *The Chamber of Commerce Journal* pointed out in 1882 that "Whilst we are plaintively examining, at home, the alterations necessary to meet the modified conditions of production, we appear of late years to have overlooked one of the most important elements of trade – that of new markets." Similar complaints about the need for new markets also emerged from merchants in Birmingham, Glasgow and Liverpool. In 1882 John Slagg, MP, told the Directors of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce that the cotton industry was suffering overproduction and was neglecting, as he put it, "the vast importance of the development of additional markets."⁹⁹ These groups put continued pressure on H.M. Government to take action in Africa. New colonies there, business interests stressed, were important for opening up new markets.¹⁰⁰ The Manchester Chamber of Commerce wrote in 1887: "we could not afford to lose sight of even small markets when some of the larger markets were getting more or less closed against us."¹⁰¹ The Council of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce informed the Foreign Office, upon experiencing the effects of the McKinley tariff on their exports to the US, that "in view of the successive limitation of our export trade, caused by hostile foreign tariffs and the need for developing fresh markets, Her Majesty's Government be urged to maintain the

sphere of British influence in Africa.”¹⁰² Furthermore, trade with West Africa had been steadily growing. Taking political control was important for preventing rivals from seizing the area and blocking out the British with protectionist policies.

By the 1880s, these fears of rival trading blocs were not unfounded. At the Berlin West Africa Conference of 1884-1885, countries like France and Portugal attacked the idea of keeping African holdings open to free trade. There had been mutual tariff discrimination between the British Royal Niger Company and French and German possessions.¹⁰³ The Liverpool Chamber of Commerce concluded:

In West Africa the British governments of the last decade have been outstripped by Germany and France; the Gambia has dwindled; the Cameroons has been lost; two foreign powers have intervened between Lagos and Gold Coast Colonies....the French have spread themselves over Senegambia and the British governments have yielded the districts of the Northern Rivers of Sierra Leone...the Chamber is of the opinion that wherever in the unappropriated territories of Africa preponderance of British trade existed, there British interests should have been secured, by proclaiming such territories spheres of British influence.¹⁰⁴

As Chamberlain shows, these concerns led the British state to act decisively. Whereas it had been previously content with informal control, direct British rule was now the only alternative. “What moved a reluctant British government to act was the recognition that British trade was in danger and that, in the last resort, the government had a duty to protect that trade.”¹⁰⁵

In East Africa, we see a different degree of economic interest. On the one hand, Britain’s shift to formal control in East Africa was initially motivated by economic concerns. The establishment of the Imperial British East Africa Company in 1885 (officially incorporated in 1888), which gave Britain some control over parts of the Sultan of Zanzibar’s domain, is one clear indication of this. On the other hand, the enterprise proved disappointing. Within a decade, in fact, the Company proved to be a failure. The subsequent decision by the British state to take direct control in Uganda in 1894, therefore, was not motivated by commercial promise. Instead, what began as an economic interest ended up as a geopolitical concern.¹⁰⁶ The coast along East Africa from the Cape had been pinpointed as a possible alternative route to India. Until 1869 the Cape route had been the main route. And even after the opening of the Suez canal, many strategists still considered that route as the best one in case a crisis in the Suez thwarted that passage.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, East Africa

became important for defending Egypt, and the Nile Valley became seen essential for British control of Egypt. Yet Italy was moving towards the Nile Valley from Eritrea and Leopold II eyed the Nile as a commercial route from his Congo. To exacerbate the fears, in 1894, the British government caught wind of a French contingency plan to send French forces to the Upper Nile.¹⁰⁸ The taking of Uganda was thus a defensive move.¹⁰⁹

Abyssinia, Egypt, territories in West and East Africa – in these places Britain's new imperialism was driven by various combinations of economic concerns, geopolitical threats, and peripheral contingencies. But what about Southeast Asia and the Pacific? A look at a few cases shows that factors similar to those seen in Africa also drove expansion into these other regions. One factor driving British annexation of Burma in 1886 was, as in Egypt, peripheral instability brought on by informal imperialism. Trade treaties with Prince Mindon in 1862 and 1867 opened up Burma to British commerce and put Mindon on a path towards modernizing his country, but it also created a myriad of local troubles. Mindon was compelled to set high taxes on his subjects to pay for his reforms, and this coupled with other economic contingencies left Burma in crisis in 1878. When Prince Thibaw took power that year, after Mindon's death, he began a campaign of anti-British sentiment and refused to comply with prior trade treaties. He also tried to impose state monopolies over the trade in key articles like cotton and sent a delegation to France, looking to obtain a new commercial treaty and replace British influence with French influence. In short, Britain faced a recalcitrant client.

An additional factor in Burma was economic interest. Thibaw's attempts to meddle in the cotton industry threatened the interests of the British firm, the Bombay Burmah Trading Corporation (BBTC). And in 1885 Thibaw accused the BBTC of underpaying royalties and wages to local workers and demanded repayment along with a fine in excess of 100,000 pounds. As this news, as well as the news of Thibaw's deal with the French, hit home, domestic opinion rallied. British Chambers of Commerce sent petitions to the India Office demanding British annexation. After Thibaw continued to refuse to resolve the BBTC dispute despite British pleas for arbitration, the British launched an invasion. At stake, then, was not only a recalcitrant Thibaw, but the economic and geopolitical effects of his resistance. Pressure upon the HM government from financial interests was critical, as was the thought of losing privileged access to cotton.¹¹⁰ Fear of French control was just as important. Not only would French control threaten to close off Britain's economic access, it

would also threaten British India, whose economic importance for the British economy at the time could not be ignored. In 1906, Winston Churchill, whose father had been Secretary for India and supported the seizure of upper Burma, wrote that fear of French control was a key motivation. The connections between Thibaw and the French “left no room to doubt the imminence of a dominant foreign influence...involving the most serious and far-reaching consequences to the Indian Empire.”¹¹¹

The establishment of colonialism in Fiji, though previously rejected by the British state, was also brought on a combination of peripheral instability, economic interests, and geopolitical threat. First, the cotton trade with Fiji had become especially important during the American Civil War. The value of the cotton trade had increased from 6,000 pounds in 1865 to 92,700 pounds by 1870.¹¹² Second, the trade had brought numerous white settlers, missionaries and foreign planters. The influx of these groups created tensions with local Fijian chiefs and the local populace. Soon enough, settlers and planters pleaded for help from the British state. When one Bishop Patteson was murdered, settlers and planters became more and more insistent upon British control. In 1872, after the murder, the interest of the colonial secretary, Lord Kimberley, was finally peaked.¹¹³ These two factors, though, needed a third. In fact, when Lord Kimberley corresponded with Gladstone about possible Fijian annexation, Gladstone was initially cautious.¹¹⁴ It was not until fears about America’s activities surfaced that the home government turned around. In 1872, news of America’s treaty for Pago Pago harbor in Samoa reached London, and this caused alarm. One of Britain’s main economic rivals was reaching into the Pacific and dangerously close to Britain’s Australasian holdings. The fear was heightened when rumors of the US creating a navy base at Pearl Harbor circulated around the same time. And, in 1874, the American chargé d’affaires in London, Benjamin Moran, inquired at the Foreign Office about Britain’s intentions towards Fiji, signaling that the US might very well have its eyes on the islands. These concerns made the issue of peripheral instability all the more unbearable, and ultimately Britain decided to shift from informal imperialism in Fiji to direct control.¹¹⁵

The cases discussed above do not exhaust all of Britain’s new imperialism. But as they cover different regions, they can be seen as representative. Together they suggest that the timing of Britain’s new imperialism, occurring amidst Britain’s economic decline, was not accidental. On the one hand, some of the developments that predicated the new imperialism were not directly connected to decline. Electoral games at home, outbreaks of disorder in the

periphery, and geopolitical competition were not the result of Britain's decreasing economic standing. On the other hand, decline did matter by making annexation a more likely response to these other developments. First, decline brought about bouts of depression and threats to British pride. Imperial assertions abroad became one way for political elites to manage these domestic problems. Second, decline itself came after Britain's hegemonic period and, therefore, after Britain's informal imperialism. Informal imperialism set the condition for peripheral instability. Britain's fear of rivals in turn made that instability increasingly intolerable. Unless managed, peripheral disorder would invite annexation by foreign powers. Finally, that prospect itself was colored by economic decline. Geopolitical competition meant that the British state was concerned about its own internal security, but what mattered was how geopolitical competition might impact the already-ailing British economy. Seizing parts of the East Africa helped maintain security for the route to India, but that route was only critical because of its economic value. Taking colonies elsewhere prevented rivals from taking hold, but that scenario became more frightful all the more due to the fear of being blocked from new areas of trade.

In short, British decline in itself does not explain the new imperialism. But the new imperialism cannot be understood without recognizing the multifaceted potency of decline as it played out in particular contexts.¹¹⁶ Decline created a larger climate of fear and threat and, combined with other factors, made annexation and imperialistic aggression more and more likely than during Britain's economic heyday. Ironically, though the new imperialism marked a new aggressiveness, that new aggression was an often desperate defense against economic demise.

UNDERSTANDING AMERICA'S TURN

We have seen that, like Britain, the United States also experienced an extended relative economic decline, beginning in the 1970s. And like Britain, it also unleashed a new imperialism around the same time. Further, we have seen how decline for Britain was indeed systematically connected to its new imperialism, however in complicated ways that far exceed any simple direct cause and effect. The question is whether the same can be said for the United States. Again, we cannot make hasty assumptions that decline sparked America's new militarism abroad. Note, for instance, the issue of terrorism. Transnational and state-sponsored terrorism was surely behind at least some of America's new militarism. Not only

was it the pretext for the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, it was also behind various missile strikes and air bombardments in North Africa (e.g. Libya, the Sudan). As terrorist acts against the United States do not seem connected to American decline, there would be little systematic about America's new imperialism. It would simply reflect defensive strikes against contingent attacks.

Still, there are good reasons to think that we must not analytically reduce America's new imperialism to defensive actions against terror. First, the various acts of terror that invited militaristic responses were not entirely contingent. As some have argued, the various terrorist incidents since the 1970s, beginning with the Iranian hostage crisis, must themselves be understood within a larger historical context. They can be seen as "blowback," reactions and resistances to America's global power. One recent study, for example, shows that transnational terrorism rose during the 1970s and continued to rise through the 1980s and 1990s.¹¹⁷ If barbarians had been at the gates, they grew in number in this critical period of America's imperial history. In this sense, America's new imperialism was indeed connected to its decline, at least as a matter of historical sequence. The terrorism that invoked American response can be seen as peripheral disorder brought about by the logics of America's own informal empire. As in the British case, the logics of America's imperial power that had unfolded during the hegemonic period created the conditions for peripheral disorder, summoning new resistances and attacks against it. Second, and more importantly, America's new imperialism was not only about responding to terrorism. Most of the other deployments, whether Panama in 1989 or Iraq, Bosnia and Haiti in the 1990s, had little to do with the threat of terrorism. If we are to understand America's new imperialism, these other instances and interventions must be apprehended.

From Nutmeg to Prestige

Consider first America's counterpart to Britain's Abyssinia: the invasion of Grenada in 1983. Here, terror was not the issue. The avowed reason for the Grenada invasion given by the Reagan administration was that it was necessary for protecting the lives of American students and citizens in the country amidst internal disorder and also to combat communism. The Marxist-Leninist New Jewel Movement (NJM) had seized power and presented the Cold War spectre of spreading communism throughout the region. But if the

issue was not terrorism, nor was it simply the spread of communism or the need to rescue students. Other factors were at work.

One has to do with economic decline itself, specifically as it was felt domestically in the form of rising unemployment and a palpable decline in profitability among key sectors of the American economy since the mid-1970s. To deal with this situation, the Reagan administration sought ways to increase profitability. One was military build-up, leading ultimately to a boon. By the end of the decade, the US economy was putting about \$300 billion into the military and already by the mid-1980s, the profit rate on defense contracts outran profitability in durable goods manufacturing.¹¹⁸ The other was deregulation of key industries. This had begun already under Carter but Reagan took it to new heights. Finally: foreign investment. The Reagan administration hoped to find new outlets abroad for American capital, and one part of the strategy was aimed at the Caribbean, wherein Grenada lay. The administration therefore announced the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) in 1982, the year before the invasion which was aimed to providing aid and liberalization at once.

The invasion of Grenada can be easily put into this larger economic situation. First of all, Reagan's strategy of military buildup needed justification. Dov S. Zakheim, an official in the Department of Defense, explained the invasion as important on that ground exactly. It helped signal "a major step toward recovery from the Vietnam syndrome" which had included calls from some sectors of Congress to decrease the military budget. The invasion was important, therefore, for persuading Congress otherwise.¹¹⁹ Second, the threat of communism spreading from the Grenada (not least with Cuba nearby and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua) was not only geopolitical but economic. It posed a potential challenge to Reagan's regional liberalization strategy. If communist regimes like NJM spread, fields for America investment would contract. Fittingly, Grenada was opened up to foreign capital soon after the invasion. American aid to the country resumed and the US Agency for International Development reported that Grenada was "ripe for investors" able to link "credits and technology in America and products and labor in Grenada."¹²⁰ Reagan visited Grenada in 1986, using it as a platform to announce a policy of enlarging the CBI and increased investment by American firms in apparel industries throughout the region.¹²¹

Beyond economics, there was another issue. To be sure, later in 1983, Reagan publicly stated that "it isn't nutmeg that's at stake in the Caribbean and Central America; it is the United States' national security."¹²² Reagan presumably meant the specter of

communism, but in reality even more than that was at stake. After all, for the USSR, Grenada was but a “raindrop in the swimming pool.”¹²³ More important, then, was the question of American strength and power in the world. Vietnam had been lost seven years earlier. The Iranian hostage crisis still loomed large. Furthermore, just two days before Reagan made the decision to send troops to Grenada he had received news of the Lebanon truck bombing that killed hundreds of US Marines and additional French servicemen. The United States appeared to be weakening in strength. Combined with the economic problems and America’s larger decline relative to other industrialized countries, the United States as a world power and leader was put into question.

The assault on Grenada followed from these combined economic and geopolitical issues. Not only did the invasion and ouster of the NJM facilitate the Reagan administration’s broader regional strategy for reinvigorating American capital (and also justifying the military budget), it was also a strategy for restoring America’s prestige amidst its putative decline. Officials in the Reagan administration were reported as stating later that “the Reagan Administration’s overriding reason for invading Grenada was to keep the United States from being perceived as a ‘paper tiger’ in the eyes of both friendly and hostile Latin American nations.” One senior official said “if we said no [to the invasion], not only might there have been another Iran with the American students...but no one would have taken us seriously any more down there.”¹²⁴ Vice President George Bush bragged at the Republican national convention in 1984: “Because President Reagan stood firm in defense of freedom [in Grenada], America has regained respect throughout the world.”¹²⁵ Later commentaries confirm this otherwise empty rhetoric. Richard Haas, who would later served under then Vice-President George Bush, admitted that the invasion was not just to install a non-communist regime but also “to show that the United States could still act effectively in the world in the aftermath of the Beirut debacle.”¹²⁶ More importantly, Zakheim of the Department of Defense explained in 1986 that “the cumulative impact of Grenada on America’s self-image should not be underestimated. It represented a clearcut military success – something that the American public had not witnessed since before Vietnam. [...] Since 1980, President Reagan has spoken of a determination to restore the United States to its role as a world leader and stand up to those who threaten American interests. Perhaps more than any other action since he has come to office, the invasion of Grenada has lent substance to such goals.”¹²⁷ In the end, Reagan’s own electoral standing was enhanced by the same token.

Later, observers contended that Grenada was the “most successful single foreign policy event of Ronald Reagan’s Presidency.”¹²⁸ All polls fittingly showed that Reagan’s popularity increased after the invasion.¹²⁹

In these ways, the invasion of Grenada was similar to Britain’s invasion of Abyssinia not just because both were portents of a resurgent imperialism. It is also similar because, like Britain’s invasion of Abyssinia, the forces animating the invasion were systematically connected to the larger context of American decline. Features of the era but not systematically connected to the decline period, like the Cold War, surely played a role too. But concerns about America’s economic demise and its potential standing as a world power were important factors as well. But what of the other instances marking America’s new imperialism?

Decline, the New Geopolitics, and Peripheral Instability

To answer it is fitting to begin by elaborating upon the situation the United States faced amidst its economic decline beyond bouts of depression or immediate concerns like the Vietnam syndrome. As with those facing Britain, they can be cataloged into three broad areas: economic competition, new political-international threats, and instability in the periphery. And as with Britain, they remained present and palpable throughout the decline period, however in different manifestations.

We have already seen that, economically, the US at the end of the twentieth century faced a structural situation similar to that of Britain in the late nineteenth century. The US saw rising competition from emerging economic rivals: first Germany and Japan, then by the 1990s the EU and China by the very end of the century. As with the British case, therefore policy-makers and planners found themselves faced with new economic concerns. In the mid-1970s, as the crisis first emerged, concerns about the negative impact of international competition upon America’s economic standing were already being expressed by American political leaders and business groups.¹³⁰ In the 1980s, as scholars further explored the decline, their work received widespread attention, including in the leading foreign policy publications of the time.¹³¹ But beyond the talk, the actions of the American state itself reveals the cognizance of America’s new economic dilemmas. Beginning in the 1980s and continuing through Clinton’s administrations in the 1990s, the American state embarked upon new economic policies in response to relative decline. In part there were domestic

policies: in response to stagflation in the late 1970s, the Carter administration made moves, however cautious, towards deregulating major industries. This deregulation, as noted, only deepened under Reagan.¹³² More notably, though, is that American economic policies also involved the global economy.

We have seen that one global strategy of the Reagan administration was to open up foreign economies to American investment through liberalization projects like the CBI. Searching for new markets and sites of investment was not in itself new, what *was* new was the decline which enhanced the need even more. Due to the declining American economy, American capital could not hope for the profitability in the US it had enjoyed in previous decades. It therefore increasingly looked abroad, and the American state under Reagan tried to facilitate the search even beyond the Caribbean Basin. “In response to the ballooning American trade deficit, intensifying fears of deindustrialization, and rising protectionist pressures,” notes Gilpin, “the Reagan Administration in the mid-1980s significantly modified America’s postwar commitment to multilateralism. The Administration began to pursue a multitrack trade policy that has not only de-emphasized multilateral negotiations, but also increased unilateralism and bilateralism (especially ‘managed trade’ with Japan) and economic regionalism as well (in the North American Free Trade Agreement with Canada and Mexico).”¹³³ Under the Reagan administration, too, moves were made to further facilitate American investment through the use of Multinational Development Banks that, as Babb shows, increasingly used loan conditionality as a mechanism for opening up new sites of investment.¹³⁴ It followed that the amount of American foreign direct investment abroad since the 1980s grew dramatically and continued through the 1990s; notably, this growth was similar to Britain’s increasing turn to foreign investment in the late nineteenth century when Britain too faced economic decline (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4
United States direct investment abroad 1990-1998, in billions dollars

Destination	1990	1993	1996	1998
Europe	214,739	285,735	389,378	489,539
Asia & Pacific	254,889	92,671	139,548	161,797
Latin America	43,348	59,302	155,925	196,655
Africa	3,690	5,469	8,162	13,491
Middle East	3,959	6,571	8,294	10,599

“Direct Investment Abroad” defined as ownership or control by one US person of 10% or more of the voting securities of an incorporated foreign business enterprise or an equivalent

interest in a unincorporated foreign business enterprise. *Source:* orig. U.S. Census Bureau 1999, *Statistical Abstract* 119th ed., p. 797; as reproduced in Milward p. 32

Subsequent administrations continued the strategy. By the 1990s, the practice of structural adjustment had become the rule rather than the exception. And the Clinton administration had made it near-official policy to facilitate American capital movements by securing new sites for investment. By 1996, 200 agreements with other nations had been signed, and by 2000, the number reached 300. “Our prosperity as a nation in the twenty-first century,” the White House’s official policy strategy stressed, “will depend upon our ability to compete effectively in international markets. [...] Over the next decade the global economy is expected to grow at three times the rate of the U.S. economy. Growth will be particularly powerful in many emerging markets. If we do not seize these opportunities, our competitors will. We must continue working hard to secure and enforce agreements that protect intellectual property rights and enable Americans to compete fairly in foreign markets.”¹³⁵

The strategy of liberalization also had a defensive rather than offensive dimension. The wave of trade agreements began in the early 1980s in response to the marked failure at the 1982 GATT rounds to get Europe to concede to US proposals. Many of the largest agreements, therefore, were regional. The Caribbean Basin Initiative was expanded into the US-Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act. The Canada-US Free Trade Agreement followed in 1988 and acted as a prelude to NAFTA in 1994. At the time, too, the US began making plans for a future Free Trade Agreement of the Americas which was to solidify the previous regionalization. The National Intelligence Council predicted: “Continued trade and investment liberalization and the expansion of free trade agreements within and outside of Latin America will be a significant catalyst of growth. Regional trade integration...and the likely conclusion of a Free Trade Area of the Americas will both boost employment and provide the political context for governments to sustain economic reforms....”¹³⁶

Intensifying trade links in the hemisphere, and particularly with Latin America and the Caribbean, was thus a counterweight to the European Union arrangements. The Commander in Chief of the US Southern Command noted proudly in 2003 that the “US conducts more than 360 billion dollars of annual trade with Latin America and the Caribbean, nearly as much as with the entire European Community”. He predicted that by

the year 2010 “trade with Latin America is expected to exceed that with the European Economic Community and Japan combined.”¹³⁷

These regionalization strategies were a response to decline. They are strikingly similar to one of the strategies pursued by the British state in the late nineteenth century: imperial federation. This was a series of policies pursued by British capitalists and policy-makers, who all called for a tightening of political and economic links within the British empire. Federation was a response to rising competition. It involved an attempt to construct a defensive commercial network around Britain’s already-existing empire, providing an alternative basis for extraction and better markets than the areas covered by Britain’s rivals.¹³⁸ America’s regional policies, building upon the space of America’s informal imperial network in Latin America and the Caribbean, was in this sense a return to history. Just as pro-federationists in Britain in the nineteenth century worried about the loss of economic ties between Britain and its colonial empire, so too General Peter Pace, the former Commander in Chief of the US’s Southern Command, noted in 2000 that “Today, our trade within the Americas represents approximately 46 percent of all U.S. exports, and we expect this percentage to increase in the future. The loss of our Caribbean and Latin American markets would seriously damage the health of the U.S. economy.”¹³⁹

Beyond these economic issues, attendant with the period of America’s economic decline were important geopolitical shifts. These shifts posed a potential threat to America’s long-standing international political power and, articulated with America’s economic trouble, presented new challenges. One shift has to do with America’s relations with Western Europe. We have seen how America’s economic competitiveness was sporadically challenged by Europe’s economic growth. But the end of the Cold War made the issue more challenging. The Cold War had provided the United States with significant political leverage over Europe. It had given justification for America’s military power and economic hegemony and served the basis for a “social compact” between the US and the European capitalist states. The United States delivered peace and security in exchange for European deference.¹⁴⁰ The Cold War’s end shattered that justification and hence America’s “crucial lever for hegemony.”¹⁴¹ In addition, the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, which turned the European Economic Community (EEC) into the European Union, not only mounted a further economic challenge (providing for an integrated common market and currency). It also raised the threat of a political challenge, creating new institutions like the Council of

Ministers and the European Commission that could advance common security and foreign policy frameworks. At the same time, Germany and France announced the formation of an all-European military corps and invited other nations to join.

That these events posed a potential threat to America's interest is seen clearly in the thinking of American defense planners and policy advisors. As early as 1991, national security advisor Brent Scowcroft complained about the meetings among Western European countries prefiguring the EU. He was especially concerned that some were meeting on security issues without American involvement.¹⁴² In response to the Franco-German Eurcorps, Bush administration officials feared that it "undercut the whole American *raison d'être* in Europe."¹⁴³ Most telling, however, is a secret Pentagon report, dated Feb. 18, 1992. The report stressed that the US "must account sufficiently for the interests of the advanced industrial nations to discourage them from seeking to overturn the established political and economic order" and "maintain the mechanism for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role." It identified "Western Europe" as one such competitor, stressing that it has "resources...sufficient to generate global power." It then explicitly stressed that it "is of fundamental importance to preserve NATO as the primary instrument of Western defense and security.... We must seek to prevent the emergence of European-only security arrangements which would undermine NATO."¹⁴⁴ The sense of threat was echoed throughout Washington. The creation of the EU and its integration of national powers posed a new threat to the US just as America's own post-Civil War union and German and Italian reunification had posed a threat to Britain.¹⁴⁵

The question of Western Europe was also tied to the rising threat of Russia in the wake of the Cold War and the place of both within the larger question of "Eurasia," including China. The end of the Cold War, again, did not mean the end of geopolitics; it simply posed new geopolitical concerns. In its wake, the American foreign policy establishment reconjured images of imperial Russia. Fretting over scenarios painted by Mackinder's traditional "heartland" theory, they remained cautious given Russia's geographic position over and next to vast natural energy reserves as well as its thousands of nuclear warheads. Eugene Rostow responded in 1993 to the collapse of the Soviet Union by saying that it was critical to contain "the [Russian] Heartland area, [which] constitutes an enormous center of power from which military forces have attacked the coastal regions of Asia and Europe (the Rimlands, in Mackinder's [*sic*] terminology)." A year later Henry Kissinger

fretted that the Eurasian heartland contained “one of the most important imperial traditions” in world history. MacKubin Thomas Owens, strategist at the Naval War College, subsequently stated that the main geopolitical imperative in the post-Cold War world was to prevent “the rise of a hegemon capable of dominating the Eurasian continental realm and of challenging the United States in the maritime realm. Zbigniew Brzezinski added in 1997 “America’s global primacy is directly dependent on how long and how effectively its preponderance on the Eurasian continent is sustained.”¹⁴⁶ He further emphasized that effective American power in Europe was critical for keeping Eurasian power in check. “The United States’ ability to project influence and power in Eurasia relies on close transatlantic ties.”¹⁴⁷ All such concerns were echoed in inner circles. The 1992 Department of Defense plan warned that Russia retains “the most military potential in all of Eurasia.” Russia will “remain the strongest military power in Eurasia and the only power in the world with the capability of destroying the United States.”¹⁴⁸

The final arena of threat came from the periphery. The 1970s and 1980s not only marked the beginnings of American decline. These were also years when America’s preceding informal empire and the attendant geopolitical structure began to show signs of fissure. The issue extended beyond barbarians at the gate. It was about the break down of America’s client regimes. Popular protests and mass movements threatened to unseat American-supported dictators from Duvalier in Haiti to Marcos in the Philippines. This was partially concomitant with the “third wave” of democratization beginning in the 1970s and carrying through the 1980s. Democratization in part implied a potential breakdown in American-supported authoritarian regimes.¹⁴⁹ The overall slow-down of the global economy in the 1970s and the subsequent debt crisis in the 1980s did not make things any easier. Around the globe, the ideology of post-colonial “developmentalism” fell apart, as so-called developing countries saw internal disorder and declining standards of living. The relative stability created by America’s informal empire “gave way to disintegrating order, simmering discontents, and unchanneled radical temperaments.”¹⁵⁰ The Middle East was one such site where unruly forces were unleashed. The late 1970s and 1980s saw the Iranian revolution and the seizure of American hostages in Iran, PLO terrorism and the Lebanon war, and the Iraq-Iran war.

Britain’s informal empire, as seen, had also contained similar potentialities for peripheral instability. But for the US, the end of the Cold War raised yet more possibilities

for instability. When combined with the breakdown of developmentalism and reverberations of the debt crises of the 1980s, the discipline over peripheral regimes became undone, and former clients were invited to be more recalcitrant to superpower dictates than before. Saddam Hussein, for instance, could invade Kuwait in 1990 without fear of a Soviet response.¹⁵¹ The breakup the Soviet Union itself posed trouble, unleashing nationalist sentiments, secessionism and “long pent-up centrifugal forces.”¹⁵² By 1997, the Central Intelligence Agency’s National Intelligence Council was worrying about the potentiality for fundamental nationalist revolution in the new Russia with clear detriment to American interests:

Potential successors to the current Russian leadership could choose to tap into nascent nationalist sentiments, fueled by the degree of Russian economic hardships and sense of disillusionment with the current cadre of politicians. [...] The most likely outlet in foreign policy would be Russian efforts to rebuild a sphere of influence over its immediate neighbors, with the Caspian energy basin a key arena; Russia will attempt to exploit Caspian energy reserves both for economic gain and political leverage.¹⁵³

That report also noted general instability all around the world, pinpointing important shifts in “the international system that emerged at the end of World War II and the environment within which the United States has become the global superpower.” Specifically, it warned that “most conflicts today are internal, not between states,” adding that “this tendency will continue, and states will find their attention increasingly riveted, and resources committed, to dealing with what goes on in countries.” It further worried that “states will fail to meet the basic requirements that bind citizens to their governments--essential services, protection, and an environment conducive to stability and growth. In some instances public expectations will outrun national capacity or governmental abilities. When these states fail, refugee flows, or worse--ethnic or civil conflict, and even state disintegration--occur, with the potential for outside intervention.” The summary conclusion was that “clear lines of war and peace, threats to national security, mission objectives--the whole host of criteria by which the United States measured stability and calibrated responses--are being rewritten.”¹⁵⁴

The context of American decline was thus very similar to that in which Britain began its descent. Economic decline carried periods of downturn at home but it also meant global

economic competition and the added threat of alternative economic and political regional centers. And as America's economic hegemony began to wither, so too did the geopolitical order that American informal empire had helped to create and tried to contain. It is in this context that the United States stepped up its imperialistic activity, not only in Grenada but elsewhere, just as it was the context for Britain's new imperialism in the late nineteenth century.

From Panama to the Balkans

To see this more clearly, we can look first at America's main interventions in its traditional sphere of influence; viz., in Latin America and the Caribbean. The 1989 Panama invasion, for instance, was partially the result in a breakdown of clientelism. The invasion of Grenada, or "Operation Just Cause", was ostensibly precipitated by Gen. Manuel Noriega's illicit activities and his harassment of American soldiers. But Noriega had long been a close ally of American agencies. "He cooperated with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), had allies in the Department of Defense (DOD), and was on and off the CIA payroll as early as 1971."¹⁵⁵ He was used to provide intelligence information on Cuba and aided the contra campaign against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. Fittingly, the US had turned its back when he abused his power. In 1979, officials in the Carter administration even blocked drug-trafficking and arms-struggling charges against him; and subsequent administrations tolerated Noriega's abuse of Panama's elections in the early 1980s.¹⁵⁶

The problem was that the relationship with Noriega – like so many clientelistic relationships - soon became unwieldy. Beginning in the mid-1980s, Noriega's Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF) heightened its repression of dissidents. One notable result was the eruption of popular protests in the country, including a massive demonstration against Noriega involving 100,000 people in Panama City. Then, in 1988, two federal grand juries indicted Noriega for racketeering, drug trafficking, and money laundering – all without the Reagan administration's consent. The administration first turned to coup attempts, which failed. When Bush took office, his administration had publicly stated that Noriega "must go."¹⁵⁷ Noriega subsequently stepped up his resistance to American control through various provocations, not least by harassing American soldiers. The further failure of covert operations and Noriega's continued recalcitrance in turn posed trouble for the Bush administration. With the Soviet Union crumbling, the question of America's future status as

a sole superpower capable of imposing a new discipline on the international system was being raised repeatedly. But, as one expert put it, “If the United States could not handle a low-level dictator in a country where it maintained bases and large forces, how would it be able to deal with far more serious international challenges?”¹⁵⁸ The invasion of Panama, with its overwhelming use of force, was thus like the invasion of Grenada, however in a post-cold war context. The power of the American military was summoned not only to deal with a resistant client but also to help demonstrate America’s power in a rapidly changing and potentially threatening unstable world.

The use of American forces to help reinstall Aristide in Haiti in 1994 was also predicated upon a breakdown of clientelism. The clientelistic relationship had plagued successive American administrations ever since the Duvalierian regime (both father and then son) began to crumble under the weight of waves of instability and popular protest. Aristide rode that wave of populism, and his fiery leftist and anti-US rhetoric did not win him friends in the Bush administration. The American-supported elections in 1990 was a pragmatic compromise: the Bush administration hoped that elections would subdue social disorder and elevate former World Bank official Marc Bazin into office, thereby replacing one client with another. But Aristide’s victory took Washington by surprise, and the CIA waged a covert campaign to discredit him and the Bush administration gave de facto support to the bloody coup led by General Raoul Cédras.¹⁵⁹ What followed was yet more popular protest, violent repression of pro-Aristide forces, and widespread international attention, not to mention a Haitian refugee crisis produced by the military regime anti-Aristide violence. The Clinton administration was finally pushed to adopt a strategy of reinstalling Aristide to quell the unstoppable protests, disorder, and media attention while nonetheless hoping to discipline him and make him a more amenable client.

Beyond the matter of recalcitrant clients, economic issues pervaded the entire affair. One of the key reasons why the US took such an interest in the internal affairs of Haiti in the first place – and why it had long been interested in maintaining an amenable client and restoring Haiti’s stability – was that Haiti was a critical site for the post-1970s strategy of neoliberal reforms and economic regionalization. The Caribbean Basin Initiative had begun with Haiti as the model.¹⁶⁰ The Clinton administration’s decision to send troops to Haiti came the same year that it announced plans to build upon that initiative and extend NAFTA to the whole hemisphere in the form of the Free Trade of the Americas plan. Yet the unrest

of the mid-1980s meant that Haiti was suffering a notable disinvestment after earlier increases.¹⁶¹ By the same token, Haiti was an important site for American investment. It is not surprising that after the international community called for embargos to protest the post-coup regime, the Bush administration (in 1992) unilaterally limited the embargo to exclude goods produced in Haiti's free trade zones, much of them involving US trade (in 1992 trade between Haiti and the US was at \$316 million).¹⁶² Even then, the future stability of Haiti, and hence continued US trade and the regionalization model, remained on the brink as long as the post-coup military regime continued to invite opposition from below and the international community. "If the international and hemispheric community allows thugs such as Raul Cedras, Michel Francois, and Phillipe Biamby to continue to rob and terrorize the people of Haiti," stated Deputy Sec. of State Strobe Talbott, "that country is likely to become a haven and a breeding ground for the forces of instability and criminality in the region."¹⁶³ The situation continued to remain tenuous as the military generals in charge refused to bend to new American demands to give up some of their power.¹⁶⁴ It soon became clear to the Clinton administration and to American capital interests that Aristide had to be returned to power, only as long as he met conditions for socioeconomic stabilization and ultimate revival. Clinton himself had noted the importance of trade. When he previously supported a lift on the embargo against Haiti, he stressed "I want to do more than lift the embargo; I want to help rebuild the economy of Haiti. That would be good for America."¹⁶⁵ The re-installation of Aristide through the hand of American military power thus came a host of new conditions, including submission to a new structural adjustment program that would further facilitate America's economic strategy for Haiti and the region as a whole.¹⁶⁶ The *New York Times* noted that the post-installation structural adjustment economic plan was widely promoted by the business community and "reads like an IMF primer."¹⁶⁷ New aid was poured in as well, thereby reestablishing a clientelistic relationship with Aristide – rather than the previous recalcitrant military – at the helm. US Deputy Sec. of State Strobe Talbott noted "Even after our exit in February 1996 we will remain in charge by means of the USAID and the private sector."¹⁶⁸

It is true that the United States had often used its military to coerce clientelistic relationships before. The United States had occupied Haiti from 1915-1934 and, in both that case and in other "banana republics" during the Cold War, American coercion was partially at the behest of the interest of American capital. But the latest invasion of Haiti was caused

by features specific to the context of American decline. First, restoring Aristide to power under new conditions was all the more desirable given America's larger strategy of economic liberalization and regionalization, exemplified in the Caribbean Basin Initiative. In support of Clinton's strategy of restoring Aristide to power, the president of International Industrial Exporters, Inc, a major TNC dealing in contracting in Haiti, said: "Mr. Aristide isn't any more the answer to Haiti's problems than is the military. But his return to power is worth the cost of the US military incursion if it fosters a resumption of free trade and the sale of US goods and services."¹⁶⁹ The "resumption" of such trade was vital given America's need to find new outlets and sites of investment under the auspices of the Caribbean Basin Initiative in the wake of falling profitability during previous years. The Office of the US Trade Representative later pointed out that successful US-Caribbean Basin has "clear benefits to the United States." From 1988 to 2006, "US exports to the CBI beneficiary countries more than doubled, reaching \$25.8 billion in 2006, making the CBI countries ranking above economies such as Taiwan, Brazil and Italy in terms of US market destinations in 2006."¹⁷⁰ Second, the social and political conditions that led to the initial breakdown in the clientelistic relationship with the long-standing Duvalier regime cannot be understood outside the context of global and local economic crises since the 1970s. That crisis not only directly hit the Haitian economy; it also, as noted earlier, prompted attempts by the US to reorder the economic region through economic liberalization in an effort to re-stimulate American capital facing declining profits at home. Haiti had been an initial object of that strategy. It been visited by economic liberalization policies imposed by multilateral lending institutions and supported by the Duvalier regime. As scholars have shown, it was that economic context that led to the wave of protests that helped first propel Aristide to power.¹⁷¹ The creation of the crisis conditions for American intervention, in short, were not unlike the creation of the conditions that had led to British intervention in places like Egypt in the late nineteenth century. Both were due to the immanent socioeconomic logics of informal empire.

If we move outside America's traditional sphere of influence, we also see how the radically changed global context attendant with American decline played a part in unleashing a new imperial aggression. The successive interventions into the Balkans in the 1990s, for instance, were not unlike those in Haiti in that they were partially conditioned by peripheral instability. In this case, the breakdown of the geopolitical order that had accompanied

America's post-WWII hegemony was key. The integrity of Yugoslavia had been maintained by both US and USSR. With the end of the Cold War, intra-Yugoslavian tensions became more likely. This thereby demanded some kind of intervention. The reason why intervention took the form of US-led NATO operations, however, had to do with other factors besides peripheral instability itself. Not least was America's relationship with the EU. As noted, the Cold War had provided the US with its primary justification for its military presence in Europe and, relatedly, Europe's dependence upon the US. At stake after the end of the Cold War era, then, was the potential loss of American political hegemony in the region, represented primarily through NATO. Why should Europe depend upon the US if the communist threat was no longer palpable? Why should Europe continue with the NATO alliance? Why should not Europe form its own security apparatus autonomous from American control?

As various scholars have stressed, the end of NATO was a key fear of American planners and policy-makers.¹⁷² Maintaining NATO was important for maintaining security in the Eurasia region. The 1992 Pentagon document had, after all, stressed in 1992 "Our strategy [after the fall of the Soviet Union] must refocus on precluding the emergence of any potential future global competitor." And as seen, various policy documents pinpointed Western Europe as one possible competitor while also stressing – as Brzezinski did – the need to forestall any competitor (whether Germany or Russia) from dominating the Eurasia region.¹⁷³ Continuance of NATO was critical. "A new Europe is still taking shape," Brzezinski stressed, "and if that Europe is to remain part of the "Euro-Atlantic" space, the expansion of NATO is essential."¹⁷⁴ The key, then, was to keep NATO intact whilst also making sure the US maintained its traditional dominance over it.¹⁷⁵

The decision to intervene in the Bosnia campaign, the subsequent campaigns in the later part of the decade, and America's promotion of the expansion of NATO followed from these considerations. "Operation Allied Force," notes former Col. Andrew Bacevich, "was neither planned nor conducted to alleviate the plight of the Kosovars." Secretary of State Albright never intended for Milosovic to accept a negotiated settlement, for this would preclude NATO action. Instead, what the US wanted first and foremost was "military action", i.e. "a demonstration of what a new, more muscular alliance under U.S. direction could accomplish in thwarting 'creeping instability.'" The intent of Operation Allied Force was to provide an object lesson to any European state fancying that it was exempt from the

rules of the post-Cold War era. It was not Kosovo that counted, but affirming the dominant position of the United States” in Europe.¹⁷⁶ Before the first campaign, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Michael J. Dugan wrote in the *New York Times* that a “win in the Balkans would establish U.S. leadership in the post-Cold War world in a way that Operation Desert Storm never could.”¹⁷⁷ In 1997, after the first 1995 campaign but before the 1999 Kosovo operation, a document circulating in the CIA believed that the first intervention had had positive impact on exactly the point fingered by Dugan. “European publics will continue to support the US military presence in Europe, partly as a hedge against Russia and renationalization of defenses, and as a result of NATO's entry into the Bosnia imbroglio—a step that reaffirmed the effectiveness of the Alliance in managing post-Cold war crises. Europeans will not find anything sacrosanct about the number of US forces stationed in their countries—their views of American leadership will be determined less by the size of the American presence than by the use of these forces for combined operations.”¹⁷⁸

Still, there was a final factor. The multiple campaigns in the Balkans were not just a matter of American security interests or American prestige. Inextricably intertwined were economic concerns. Both the maintenance of an American-led NATO apparatus and an end to the Bosnia crisis was important for preventing instability in the region. While rising rivals in Europe later posed an economic threat to American competitiveness, the fact remained that it was a critical site for American exports. As Secretary of State Warren Christopher stressed in 1995, “all told, Europe accounts for almost half of the foreign revenues of American firms. Our investment in Europe alone roughly equals that in the rest of the world put together.”¹⁷⁹ He then pointed out that “the terrible conflict in Bosnia remains the single-greatest threat to our vision of an integrated Europe at peace.”¹⁸⁰ Fittingly, just before the later bombing campaign in Kosovo in 1999, President Clinton told an audience of local government employees of the AFL-CIO: “if we’re going to have a strong economic relationship that includes our ability to sell around the world, Europe has got to be a key...That’s what this Kosovo thing is all about.”¹⁸¹ While the context of Clinton’s speech would make us wonder if it was just election rhetoric, the very fact that Clinton believed it could resonate is telling: in a context of declining American competitiveness, foreign policy interventions that had economic motives could win support.

To be sure, various other policy-makers in Washington also stressed the economic factor as an important one for intervention. Former Director of the NSA, William Odum,

had warned in 1992 that “failure to act effectively in Yugoslavia will not only effect U.S. security interests but also U.S. economic interests. Our economic interdependency with Western Europe creates large numbers of American jobs.”¹⁸² In the end, economic benefit accrued. US investment in Europe “increased sevenfold between 1994 and 1998” and “trade between the United States and the European Union also rose handsomely, to \$450 billion per year.”¹⁸³ Continued access to European markets, hence regional stability, was thus vital to American interests. In 1993, Senator Richard Lugar (R-Ind) thus supported intervention in Bosnia because “there will be devastating economic effects in Europe of a spread of war and, thus, the loss of jobs in this country *as we try to base a recovery upon our export potential.*”¹⁸⁴ Access and stability was thus necessary for maintaining the profitability of American capital in the wake of American decline. It was also important for keeping an American hand in the potentially autarkic European Union that had been formed just two years before America’s first operation in the Balkans in 1995.

America’s relations with the African continent provide a point of contrast to America’s overwhelming military commitments in the Balkans and its multiple interventions in Central America and the Caribbean. Africa also saw peripheral instability. But the continent was simply not on the American states’ strategic map. While certain raw materials had been seen as essential for America’s economic base in the mid-twentieth century, many of those raw materials had lost their vitality as alternative technologies and new industries shifted away from them. Unlike Europe or the south of the western hemisphere, therefore, it was not part of the American states’ plan for economic recovery amidst America’s economic fall. And while the Clinton administration had hoped that, one day, the African continent and its “700 million consumers” might serve as a fruitful field for American products, the fact remained that the entire continent only constituted a small 1 percent of total U.S. trade in the 1990s. US direct investment in Europe reached 389,378 billion and in Latin America 155,925 billion in 1996. In Africa it was a mere 8,162 billion.¹⁸⁵ As a result, the widespread instability in Africa, amounting to peripheral crises not unlike crises elsewhere in the world, did not summon massive American military power. As Bacevich notes, “conditions that in the Balkans...[that] the United States found intolerable were in Africa merely unfortunate.”¹⁸⁶ Exceptions included the Somali crisis and the later missile strike against the Al Shifa pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum in response to the terrorist bombing of US diplomatic missions in Tanzania and Kenya. Even then, these and other small deployments

did not involve the same amount of military power deployed in Panama, Haiti, or the Balkans. Nor did they necessitate continued visits. The crisis in Haiti conjured American deployments not only in 1994 but also in 2004. The Balkans called for two major interventions in the 1990s. But the initial use of military power in the African cases did not invite continued interest.

Iraq in Context

We can now turn to another area in which American military power was summoned: the Middle East. The invasion of Iraq in 1991, like the foregoing cases, was determined by a conjunction of factors particular to the context of decline. The first was peripheral instability brought on by America's own informal tactics. Before Hussein invaded Kuwait, he had been a client of the United States. After Iraq and Iran had begun their war in 1980, the Reagan administration had come to the decision to treat him as their ally. A National Security Council document in 1983 had explicitly stated that an Iranian victory would be devastating for the US (Iran, recall, had previously captured American hostages). Consequently, the White House and State Department pressured the Export-Import Bank to finance Iraq; the Department of Agriculture facilitated Iraqi purchases of American agricultural commodities; the US military provided intelligence support; and Reagan sent a presidential envoy (Donald Rumsfeld, then head of a major multinational pharmaceutical firm) to consult with Hussein and his regime.¹⁸⁷ Even after Iran conceded defeat in 1988, American support continued. Until at least 1990, U.S. firms sold aircraft to the regime; the US government approved licenses for American firms to sell biological products and electronics equipment to Iraqi missile-producing plants; and under Bush agricultural credits to Iraq were doubled to \$1 billion a year.¹⁸⁸ But Hussein as client acted as other American clients – and British clients before – had acted: he overstepped his bounds by invading Kuwait. In part the logics of clientelism help explain the action: Hussein had previously sent “feelers” to the Bush administration to get a sense of how the US would respond to an invasion. The responses were ambiguous; while Secretary of Defense Cheney responded that the US would not take kindly to an invasion of Kuwait, the US State Department and the US Ambassador implied that the US would not take an opposed stance.¹⁸⁹ In any case, Hussein did invade Kuwait, and this created a scenario that called for some kind of U.S. action.

The reasons why the action took the form of a massive military strike are two-fold. The first has to do with oil. This might be obvious, but it was not so simple as U.S. oil interests hoping to tap Kuwait. Rather, the threat was that Iraq might monopolize oil reserves in the gulf. Washington feared that Iraq, by taking Kuwait, would not only have both its own oil and Kuwaiti oil, but also then take Saudi Arabia, thereby controlling a majority of the region's oil reserves. This was the frightful scenario of a single "oil hegemon," a scenario that was, American strategists contended, simply impermissible.¹⁹⁰ The threat was real in the eyes of the American administration. It is now known that the United States had made contingency plans to invade the Middle East as a result of the oil embargo of 1973.¹⁹¹ With the invasion of Kuwait, a similar contingency appeared to be unfolding. Richard Haas, who received a Presidential Medal for his role in developing the invasion plan (he was the Special Assistant to Bush the elder and National Security Council Senior Director for Near East and South Asian Affairs), thought so for sure. The invasion of Kuwait, he said, raised fears in the administration that "Iraq was preparing to invade Saudi Arabia. Even if not, it was thought that an Iraq that controlled Kuwait could intimidate Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states – and as a result dominate the world's energy markets."¹⁹² Therefore, one key objective of the invasion was to maintain "the security and stability of Saudi Arabia and the entire Gulf region." Among the more "immediate concerns" guiding the invasion, he said, were about "energy interests and the well-being of America's traditional friends in the Middle East."¹⁹³

There is, however, a final factor. This helps explain not only the decision to use force but also the fact that the use of force was so overwhelming – the largest deployment in the Middle East perhaps since WWII. That is: a symbolic display to maintain America's global position amidst potential charges of decline. In part the display was a signal to Europe that it still needed American patronage. According to McCormick, the 1991 invasion was not just an attack on Iraq but simultaneously a de facto policy toward Europe.¹⁹⁴ It was a "resource war' to remind Europe that it still needed America to maintain access to global raw materials in a post-Cold War world." The subsequent air strikes under Clinton served a similar function, acting "as a continuing reminder to EU nations (and Japan) that they still needed American protection to maintain the stability of the Persian Gulf region and its oil production, on which they depended."¹⁹⁵ At the same time, the war was a signal to American publics and the world more generally that the United States was not in fact in decline; that its

military power could effectively maintain America's dominance and that countries like Germany and Japan would not be able to overtake America. Casting out Saddam Hussein's army from Kuwait would "showcase the capabilities and competence of the U.S. military"; it would not only justify the military buildup of the preceding decade but also "demonstrate the utility of American military power, now outside the context of the Cold War." According to Col. Bacevich, who was posted in the Gulf, "this would validate America's continuing capacity to exercise global leadership – thereby giving lie to the forecasts, then much in fashion, that the United States faced imminent decline, its standing soon to be eclipsed by economic powerhouses like Japan or a just-reunified Germany."¹⁹⁶ Fittingly, in the aftermath of the wildly successful operation, President Bush began speaking of a "new world order" which was optimistically to be one wherein that reproduced the "old" order: a world order that depended upon America's leadership and patronage. If the United States could not dominate economically, at least it could dominate militarily.

The subsequent invasion of Iraq in 2003 in the wake of September 11th revealed the fissures of that new world order. It is already clear that terrorism and weapons of mass destruction constituted only one issue at stake in the invasion. At stake too was the interminable issue of oil. Oil was a concern in 1991, but it took on increasing importance as the 1990s gave way to the 2000s. Given that the September 11 terrorists were from Saudi Arabia, the United States faced the threat of having to eventually terminate its relations with its long-standing oil client. Just as importantly was the rapid rise of China, partially brought on by American investment fleeing the U.S. since the 1970s. China's phenomenal growth meant that it could be finally added to the roster of the seemingly interminable list of potential alternative power centers. Already in 2000, the Chairman of the National Intelligence Council reported that China's rise was already fact. "The real question, then, is not whether China will be a major regional power, but rather how big a power it will be and, more importantly, how China will use its power."¹⁹⁷ Later, in 2003, the year the US invasion of Iraq unfolded, the Council on Foreign Relations tried to downplay China's capabilities, asserting that militarily it was decades behind the United States. But by then China's economic growth had already fueled fears among officials in Bush the Younger's administration of the rise of a Eurasian superpower capable of overtaking the United States once and for all.¹⁹⁸ The Institute for International Economics, which had on its board prominent economic strategists like Paul Volcker and Larry Summers, warned about the

economic dimensions of China's rise. Among the three "structural international economic challenges," it reported, was the creation of an "East Asian economic bloc that could create a tripolar world economy, with significant geopolitical as well as economic implications for the United States."¹⁹⁹ These economic and strategic concerns regarding China were only further fueled by Russia's "strategic relationship" – as the National Intelligence Council called it – with China, including the sale of Russian technology and weapons. Attendant with this fear was Russia's own bid for regional power, manifested in part by its continual attempts to gain advance in the movement of oil and natural gas from the Caspian region.²⁰⁰ Even the *Economist* magazine took note, warning in 1999 that China and Russia would work together to gain preferential control over the energy rich Caspian Sea basin. The following year, in 2000, a National Intelligence Council report forecasted possible global scenarios that could unfold by 2015. One of them was that "China, India, and Russia form a defacto geostrategic alliance in an attempt to counterbalance US and Western influence."²⁰¹

Many scholars across the political spectrum have argued that the Iraq invasion was motivated in light of these Eurasian economic and political threats. David Harvey (2003) notes that a permanent U.S. presence in Iraq would provide a new site for controlling oil that, in turn, would provide the United States with "a powerful US military bridgehead on the Eurasian land mass." This would give the United States a "powerful geostrategic position in Eurasia with at least the potentiality to disrupt any consolidation of a Eurasian power."²⁰² The Chinese economy, after all, depends upon foreign oil. In 2003, China surpassed Japan as the world's second largest consumer of oil, behind the United States. Any future Chinese military force would also depend upon foreign oil. Likewise, in an article *The American Conservative*, Anthony Layne argued:

The real reason the administration went to war had nothing to do with terrorism. [...] The administration went to war in Iraq to consolidate America's global hegemony and to extend U.S. dominance to the Middle East by establishing a permanent military stronghold in Iraq for the purposes of controlling the Middle Eastern oil spigot (thereby giving Washington enormous leverage in its relations with Western Europe and China); allowing Washington to distance itself from an increasingly unreliable and unstable Saudi Arabia; and using the shadow of U.S. military power to bring about additional regime changes in Iran and Syria.

Without access to administration documents, it is difficult to either validate or invalidate these arguments. But any attempt to validate or invalidate them would have to take into account a number of facts already available. The first is that, before the 2003 invasion, policy-makers with experience in the Gulf were already forecasting the need for future American intervention. Richard Haas wrote in 1999 that the use of American military force was imminent because “U.S. and industrialized world dependence upon Gulf energy resources shows no sign of abating. [...] Politically, economically, and militarily, developments in the Gulf have a direct and profound impact upon the Middle East and both Central and South Asia. Important and perhaps vital U.S. interests would suffer sharply were the Persian Gulf to fall under the sway of a hostile Iran or Iraq.”²⁰³ The second is that Iraq’s oil reserves, thought to be the second largest in the world, amount to five times the total in the U.S. and remain the least explored of the world’s oil-rich areas. Only two thousand have been drilled in Iraq, while a million have been drilled in Texas alone.²⁰⁴ The third is that, despite all talk of a temporary occupation, after the invasion the US initiated the construction of massive military bases in Iraq that the Pentagon referred to as “enduring bases.” By 2007, at least five self-sufficient bases were underway. One of them, reported in the *Washington Post*, is the Balad Air Base which has a miniature golf course, a cinema, a football field, and a neighborhood called “KBR-land” named after a Halliburton subsidiary. All of the bases have been built far away from major urban centers but close enough to have “power projection capacity”; i.e. potentially capable of hitting regional targets outside Iraq.²⁰⁵ Fourth, the Bush administration made clear that it was pushing the Iraqi government to pass a new law for dealing with the distribution of oil revenues. The US version of such a law ceded nearly all the oil to Western companies, making it the most open to foreign control compared with the nationalized controls exercised by Saudi Arabi, Kuwait, and Iran.²⁰⁶

In this sense, America’s military deployments in the Middle East replayed the scramble for Africa in the late 19th century. They were part of a wider struggle to control raw materials vital for the world-economy. But while Africa had been the site of much of Britain’s new imperialism in the late nineteenth century, one hundred years later the strategic site of concern had shifted to other regions, specifically the Middle East. The Iraq war might very well be America’s counterpoint to the Boer War. At the very least, what both wars mark is not the strength of the initiators but their growing weakness. They, along with the other

instances of the new imperialisms, represent last ditch efforts by falling hegemons to ward off impending doom – acts of desperation amidst the enduring threat of global demise.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ {Chamberlain, 1984 #2408}, p. 148
- ² {Chamberlain, 1984 #2408}, p. 149
- ³ {Kennedy, 1987 #1335}, p. 228
- ⁴ {Chamberlain, 1984 #2408}, p. 149
- ⁵ {Kennedy, 1987 #1335}, p. 228
- ⁶ {Chamberlain, 1984 #2408}, p. 148
- ⁷ {Dilke, 1890 #2418}, p. 4
- ⁸ {Thompson, 2001 #2420}, p. 287.
- ⁹ {Bodelson, 1968 #1421}, p. 82.
- ¹⁰ {Lloyd, 1880 #2461}, p. 15-16.
- ¹¹ For a recent study showing an earlier starting point than 1973 but affirming decline, see {Chase-Dunn, 2002 #1334}.
- ¹² {Corden, 1990 #1411}, fn. 4
- ¹³ {Strange, 1987 #1405}
- ¹⁴ {Arrighi, 1994 #734}. On finance and the service sector in the British case, see {Cain, 1985 #2379; Cain, 1993 #1427}.
- ¹⁵ {Brenner, 2002 #1403}.
- ¹⁶ {Bergesen, 1985 #1401}.
- ¹⁷ {Du Boff, 2003 #1404}.
- ¹⁸ {Boswell, 2004 #1400}.
- ¹⁹ *The Economist*, 14 April 2007, p. 12.
- ²⁰ {Bergsten, 2005 #2439}, p. 20
- ²¹ {Bergsten, 2005 #2439}, pp. xviii
- ²² National Intelligence Council, “Global Trends 2010”, Nov. 1997.
- ²³ For a good assessment of Robinson and Gallagher’s thesis and some of the key debates around it, see {Kennedy, 1984 #1452} and {Louis, 1976 #2445}.
- ²⁴ Minutes by Carnarvon and Bulwer-Lytton, 21 January 1859, CO 201/504 vol. 3; see also Eldridge 1967: 173.
- ²⁵ PD 1874, v. 221, July 17, columns 185 and 186; see also discussion by {McIntyre, 1967 #2421}, p. 332.
- ²⁶ {Sturgis, 1984 #1423}, p. 87
- ²⁷ {Brown, 1978 #2423}
- ²⁸ {McIntyre, 1967 #2421}.
- ²⁹ {Koebner, 1964 #1695}, pp. 81-106.
- ³⁰ {Snape, 1882 #2383}, p. 5.
- ³¹ {Johnson, 1876 #2447}, p., 7.
- ³² {Kitson Clark, 1967 #2446}, p. 65 {Kitson Clark, 1967 #2446}
- ³³ {Arrighi, 2002 #2448}, p. 21
- ³⁴ {Nardin, 1990 #2426}, p. 1
- ³⁵ {Haas, 1999 #2442}, p. 31
- ³⁶ {Banks, 1999 #2478}
- ³⁷ {Arrighi, 2002 #2448}, p. 21; [Wallerstein, 2002 #1328], p. 64
- ³⁸ Bacevich, *American Empire*, p. 142-3, quoting from U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, *New World Coming: The United States Commission on National Security/21st Century*, Wash D.C., 1999, p. 128
- ³⁹ To determine these types I referred to the descriptions of the operations provided in the Federation of American Scientists’ lists and the list by the State Department (Collier 1993; US Congress 1970).
- ⁴⁰ Admittedly, the two periods are not exactly the same. As Britain experienced decline and economic competition, it resorted to colonization. In contrast, America’s recent wave involves various types of imperialistic activities, but long-term colonization is not one of them. Still, we should not expect the two periods to be exactly the same. Every hegemon operates within the confines its particular global climate (Boswell 2004). Today the United States operates in a climate where colonization is not as acceptable as it was in the late 19th century.
- ⁴¹ {Eldridge, 1978 #1678: 133, orig. emphasis}.
- ⁴² {Harcourt, 1980 #2409}, p. 91.
- ⁴³ {Godfrey, 1882 #2458}, p. 4.

-
- 44 {Chamberlain, 1984 #2408}, p. 149
- 45 {Chamberlain, 1984 #2408}, p. 149
- 46 {O'Brien, 1992 #1712}, p. 104
- 47 (Hynes 1976: 972).
- 48 {Morris, 1885 #2457}, p. 4, 10-11
- 49 {Hynes, 1976 #1426}, p. 972.
- 50 {Kennedy, 1981 #2453}, p. 29
- 51 Quoted in {Buckle, 1920 #2451}, pp. 133-134
- 52 quoted in {Tyler, 1938 #2450}, p. 14
- 53 {Kennedy, 1975 #2429}, p. 144
- 54 Disraeli quoted in {Tyler, 1938 #2450}, p. 18
- 55 {Beeler, 1997 #2454}, p. 16-17
- 56 {Kennedy, 1981 #2453}, p. 29
- 57 Disraeli quoted in {Tyler, 1938 #2450}, p. 18
- 58 {Kennedy, 1975 #2429}, p. 146
- 59 {Beeler, 1997 #2454}, p. 16-17
- 60 {Lambert, 1995 #2452}, p. 73
- 61 Figures from Table 4.1, p. 75 of {Lambert, 1995 #2452}
- 62 Colomb quoted in {Semmel, 1986 #1537}, p. 91
- 63 {Kennedy, 1981 #2453}, p. 29
- 64 {Kennedy, 1981 #2453}, p. 29
- 65 {Burroughs, 1999 #1666}, p. 334
- 66 {Colomb, 1867 #2460}, p. 2-3.
- 67 {Lloyd, 1880 #2461}, p. 58
- 68 Memo on Read to Buckingham, London, 9 May 1868, C.O. 273/25 quoted in {McIntyre, 1967 #2421}, p. 161.
- 69 {Routledge, 1974 #1709}, p. 278
- 70 {Darwin, 1997 #1422}, p. 631
- 71 {Webster, 2000 #1707}, p. 1006.
- 72 Such is the famous story told by {Robinson, 1961 #1721}, ch. 4. See also {Owen, 1972 #1717}.
- 73 {Davis, 1988 #1612}, p. 43
- 74 {Edelstein, 1982 #2412}
- 75 {Kennedy, 1987 #1335}, p. 227
- 76 {Chamberlain, 1999 #2443}, p. 43
- 77 {Harcourt, 1980 #2409}, p. 88-9
- 78 Marry's memo, on his interview with Napier 4 Aug. 1868, FO 1/26, PRO.
- 79 {Harcourt, 1980 #2409}, p. 89-90; quote on p. 89.
- 80 {Harcourt, 1980 #2409}, p. 89
- 81 {Harcourt, 1980 #2409}..
- 82 Northcote to Napier, quoted in {Harcourt, 1980 #2409}, p. 103
- 83 Lloyd's, 31 May 1868, p. 6 quoted in {Harcourt, 1980 #2409}, p. 104
- 84 Quoted in {Harcourt, 1980 #2409}, p. 105; orig. *Lloyd's* 8 Sept. 1867, p. 6
- 85 Quoted in {Harcourt, 1980 #2409}, p. 107
- 86 Northcote to Parkington 21 Oct. 1868 quoted in {Harcourt, 1980 #2409}, p. 103.
- 87 {Chamberlain, 1988 #1420}, p. 132. For similar arguments on social imperialism and jingoism, see Cunningham
- 88 See {MacKenzie, 1986 #2005}, p. 2-3; {Cunningham, 1971 #2455}; {Cunningham, 1981 #2456}. This is not distinct from the trend noted long ago by Herbert Spencer. For Spencer, Britain's new imperialism marked a "re-barbarisation" whereby Britain's ruling classes, enamored with the ancient militarism of Rome, directed the press and parliament towards a new jingoism celebrating aggression.
- 89 {Webster, 2000 #1707}, p. 1019.
- 90 {Green, 1995 #2464}.
- 91 See also {Kennedy, 1984 #1452}, p. 29
- 92 "The Strength and Weakness of the British Empire: Dedicated to the Working Men of England" (London: Wyman & Sons, 1886), p. 152-154
- 93 {Hyam, 1999 #1527}, p. 39
- 94 {Cain, 1993 #1427}, p. 369
- 95 {Cain, 1993 #1427}, p. 369
- 96 Dilke quoted in {Galbraith, 1978 #2463}, p. 484
- 97 Gladstone quoted in {Hyam, 1999 #1527}, p. 40
- 98 {Porter, 1999 #1510}, p. 12.
- 99 {Hynes, 1976 #1426}, p. 973
- 100 {Hynes, 1976 #1426}, p. 974-977

- ¹⁰¹ MG, 1 Nov. 1887 quoted in {Hynes, 1976 #1426}, p. 977. See also Hopkins “Economic imperialism in West Africa: Lagos, 1880-92”, *EcHR*, 1968.
- ¹⁰² MBCC, 18 June 1890 quoted in {Hynes, 1976 #1426}, p. 977
- ¹⁰³ {Hynes, 1976 #1426}, p. 976
- ¹⁰⁴ Quoted in Fieldhouse, *Economics and Empire*, p. 326; orig. Rob and Gallagher *Africa and the Vicotirans* p. 382.
- ¹⁰⁵ {Chamberlain, 1999 #2443}, p. 55
- ¹⁰⁶ {Fieldhouse, 1973 #1626}, p. 383.
- ¹⁰⁷ {Chamberlain, 1999 #2443}, p. 58
- ¹⁰⁸ {Fieldhouse, 1973 #1626}, p. 380-381.
- ¹⁰⁹ {Robinson, 1961 #1721}. See also {Chamberlain, 1999 #2443}, p. 58.
- ¹¹⁰ See {Webster, 2000 #1707} for this story.
- ¹¹¹ Churchill quoted in Fieldhouse, *Economics and Empire* p. 389; orig. in W.S. Churchill, *Lord Randolph Churchill*, (London 1906), I, 521
- ¹¹² {McIntyre, 1960 #1710}, p. 366.
- ¹¹³ {Routledge, 1974 #1709}, p. 279
- ¹¹⁴ ({McIntyre, 1962 #1711}, p. 271
- ¹¹⁵ {McIntyre, 1960 #1710}, p. 360-361.
- ¹¹⁶ This larger argument has been eloquently registered by {Kennedy, 1984 #1452} and {Porter, 1999 #1510}.
- ¹¹⁷ {Enders, 2000 #2489}.
- ¹¹⁸ {Bernstein, 1994 #2440}, p. 23
- ¹¹⁹ {Zakheim, 1986 #2434}, p. 179
- ¹²⁰ <http://multinationalmonitor.org/hyper/issues/1984/01/review-reagan.html>; accessed 12/11/07
- ¹²¹ {Division, 2005 #2490}, Appendix B, “Caribbean Basin Initiative.”
- ¹²² Quoted in {Williams, 2002 #2430}, p. 661
- ¹²³ {Maynes, 1986 #2435}, p. 187
- ¹²⁴ {Gwertzman, 1983 #2431}, p. 1
- ¹²⁵ NYT Aug. 22, 1984
- ¹²⁶ {Haas, 1999 #2442}, p. 25
- ¹²⁷ {Zakheim, 1986 #2434}, p. 180
- ¹²⁸ Quoted in {Nardin, 1990 #2426}, p. 1
- ¹²⁹ {Zakheim, 1986 #2434}, p. 180
- ¹³⁰ {Gilpin, 2002 #1384}, p. 168.
- ¹³¹ See for example {Huntington, 1988/1989 #2471}.
- ¹³² {Gordon, 1994 #2475}; see also {Harvey, 2005 #2476}, pp. 23-26
- ¹³³ {Gilpin, 2002 #1384} p. 168.
- ¹³⁴ {Babb, 2009 #2474}
- ¹³⁵ {Clinton, 1998 #2473}, p. 29
- ¹³⁶ National Intelligence Council, “Global Trends 2015”, Dec. 2000
- ¹³⁷ {Hill, 2003 #2483}.
- ¹³⁸ The earliest and best work on federation is {Tyler, 1938 #2450}.
- ¹³⁹ Furthermore, the regionalization strategies and their various bilateral or multilateral agreements were useful as carrots as well as sticks. Gowan suggests that all of the initiatives, including APEC, were about “mercantilist diplomacy.” By initiating various trade agreements, rivals were compelled to worry about a loss of access or preferences, which in turn gave the American state more bargaining power for policies that might help stem the economic advances of rivals.¹³⁹
- ¹⁴⁰ Hence “continental Europe generally followed wherever America led. And it did so because America’s nuclear shield and America’s promotion of global economic expansion enabled it to deliver on its promissory notes of peace and prosperity to a continent that had known neither for four decades” {McCormick, 2004 #2467}, p. 77. This point has been made by numerous scholars. See also {Lundestad, 1986 #2468} and {Layne, 2006 #2424}, esp. pp. 107-109.
- ¹⁴¹ {McCormick, 2004 #2467}, p. 81.
- ¹⁴² “State of the World in the 1990s,” *U.S. Institute of Peace Journal* (February 1991): p. 3. See also {Carpenter, 1999 #2404}.
- ¹⁴³ Jonathan G. Clarke, “The Eurocorps: A Fresh Start in Europe,” *Cato Institute Foreign Policy Briefing* no. 21, December 28, 1992, p. 4.
- ¹⁴⁴ Gellman, Barton “Keeping the U.S. First: Pentago Would Preclude a Rival Superpower” *Washington Post*, March 11, 1992.
- ¹⁴⁵ See Charles Kupchan, *The End of the American Century*.
- ¹⁴⁶ All preceding quotes from {Bellamy Foster, 2006 #2469}.
- ¹⁴⁷ Brzezinski, “A geostrategy for Eurasia”, online paper for the *Project on Defense Alternatives*.
- ¹⁴⁸ Patrick Tyler, “Excerpts From Pentagon’s Plan: *Prevent the Emrgence of a New Rival,” *The New York Times*, March 8, 1992, sec. 1, p. 14.
- ¹⁴⁹ On the “third wave” see {Huntington, 1991 #646}.
- ¹⁵⁰ [Wallerstein, 2002 #1328], p. 64.
- ¹⁵¹ {Bacevich, 2002 #1398}, p. 61.

-
- 152 {Bacevich, 2002 #1398}, p. 61.
- 153 National Intelligence Council, "Global Trends 2010", Nov. 1997.
- 154 National Intelligence Council, "Global Trends 2010", Nov. 1997.
- 155 {Gilboa, 1995-1996 #2470}, p. 541.
- 156 {Gilboa, 1995-1996 #2470}, p. 541-2.
- 157 McAllister, Bill, "Bush Vows to Press Noriega," *Washington Post* 23 Dec. 1988.
- 158 {Gilboa, 1995-1996 #2470}, p. 559. See also {Cramer, 2006 #2484}, p. 195.
- 159 {Morley, 1997 #2485}, pp. 364-67.
- 160 {Robinson, 1996 #2482}, p. 270
- 161 http://www.country-data.com/frd/cs/dominican_republic/do_appnb.html.
- 162 *ibid.*, p. 304.
- 163 Strobe Talbott, "Pursuing the restoration of democracy in Haiti," speech, US Department of State Dispatch, 23 May 1994.
- 164 {Morley, 1997 #2485}, pp. 374-380.
- 165 Quoted in {Dow, 1995 #2486}, p. 15.
- 166 {Hallward, 2004 #2462}, p. 29-30.
- 167 Catherine Manegold, "Aristide Picks a Prime Minister with Free-Market Ideas," *New York Times* 25 Oct. 1994, p. A1.
- 168 Quoted in {Robinson, 1996 #2482}, p. 311.
- 169 Quoted in {Robinson, 1996 #2482}, p. 306-7.
- 170 {Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, 2007 #2472}, p. 1.
- 171 See {Robinson, 1996 #2482}, pp. 269-276 and {Hallward, 2004 #2462}.
- 172 {Gowan, 1999 #2477}; {Bacevich, 2002 #1398}; {Layne, 2006 #2424}.
- 173 Z. Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard* (New York, 1997), pp. 10, 198.
- 174 Z. Brzezinski, "A geostrategy for Eurasia..."
- 175 {Bacevich, 2002 #1398}, p. 103-107.
- 176 {Bacevich, 2002 #1398}, p. 104-5.
- 177 "Operation Balkan Storm: Here's a Plan" *NYT*, 29 Nov 1992, p. E11.
- 178 National Intelligence Council, "Global Trends 2010", Nov. 1997.
- 179 Warren Christopher "Charting a Transatlantic Agenda for the 21st Century: Address at Casa de America, Madrid, 2 June 1995" in *US Department of State Dispatch*, 5 June 1995, vol. 6, no. 23, p. 468.
- 180 Warren Christopher "Charting a Transatlantic Agenda for the 21st Century: Address at Casa de America, Madrid, 2 June 1995" in *US Department of State Dispatch*, 5 June 1995, vol. 6, no. 23, p. 470.
- 181 William Clinton, "Remarks by the President to the AFSCME Biennial Convention" (Washington, D.C.: the White House), March 23, 1999. See also Bacevich, *American Empire*, p. 105
- 182 William E. Odom: "NATO'S Expansion: Why the Critics Are Wrong," *The National Interest* 39, Spring 1995, p. 44. See also {Layne, 2006 #2424} and {Layne, 1997 #2425}, p. 100.
- 183 {Bacevich, 2002 #1398}, p. 105.
- 184 Quoted in {Layne, 1997 #2425}, p. 100.
- 185 U.S. Census Bureau 1999, *Statistical Abstract* 119th ed., p. 797.
- 186 {Bacevich, 2002 #1398}, p. 108.
- 187 {Mearsheimer, 2003 #2480}, p. 56; {Battle, 2003 #2479}.
- 188 Geoff Simons, *Iraq: From Sumer to Saddam*, 2nd ed. (New York: St. Martins Press, 1996), pp. 317-329 and Murray Waas, "What Washington Gave Saddam for Christmas," in Sifry and Cerf, eds., pp. 85-95. See also {Selfa, 1999 #2481}.
- 189 {Mearsheimer, 2003 #2480}, p. 54.
- 190 {Layne, 2006 #2424}, p. 178-9
- 191 "Britain Says U.S. Planned to Seize Oil in '73 Crisis' *NYT* 4 Jan. 2004, A6.
- 192 {Haas, 1999 #2442}, p. 32
- 193 {Haas, 1999 #2442}, p. 33
- 194 {McCormick, 2004 #2467}, p. 83.
- 195 {McCormick, 2004 #2467}, p. 84.
- 196 {Bacevich, 2002 #1398}, p. 58-59
- 197 Gannon, John C. "Intelligence Challenges for the New Millennium: A Special Look At Russia and China . Remarks to the Mershon Center, Ohio State University, 26 April 2000.
- 198 See the "Project for a New American Century", sections regarding China.
- 199 {Bergsten, 2005 #2439}, pp. xviii
- 200 See, for example, reports on Russia at a conference held by the National Intelligence Council: "Russia in the International System," Conference Report, 1 June 2001, National Intelligence Council.
- 201 National Intelligence Council, "Global Trends 2015", Dec. 2000.
- 202 {Harvey, 2003 #1326}, p. 85.
- 203 {Haas, 1999 #2442}, p. 127
- 204 {Holt, 2007 #2488}, p. 3.

-
- ²⁰⁵ Thomas E. Ricks “Biggest Base in Iraq Has Small-Town Feel” *Washington Post*, 4 Feb. 2006.
- ²⁰⁶ Antonia Juhasz, “Whose Oil is it Anyway?” *New York Times* 13 March, 2007, op-ed.