2001

# Betwixt and between: exploring the utility of the concept "semiperiphery"

Michael Elliot
*San Jose State University*

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# BETWIXT AND BETWEEN:

# EXPLORING THE UTILITY OF THE CONCEPT "SEMIPERIPHERY"

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Sociology

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Michael Elliott

May 2001

UMI Number: 1403964



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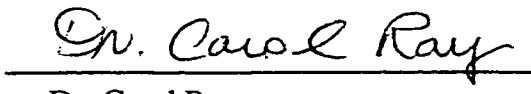

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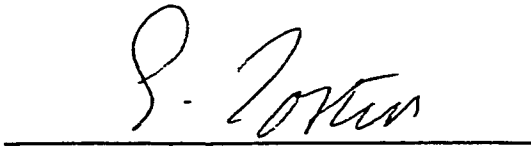

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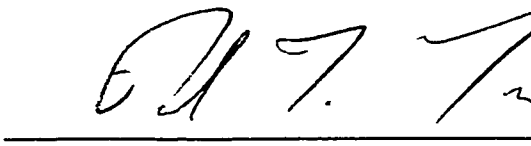

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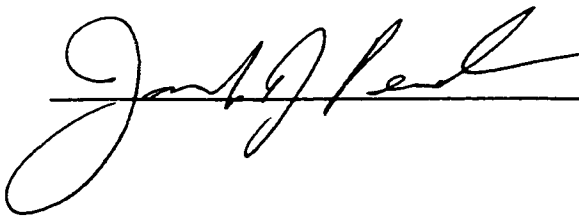

ABSTRACT

BETWIXT AND BETWEEN
EXPLORING THE UTILITY OF THE CONCEPT "SEMIPERIPHERY"

by Michael Elliott

This thesis critically examines both the theoretical and empirical utility of the concept "semiperiphery" as it has evolved in the world-systems literature. Following an introduction to the problem, the theoretical lineage of world-system theory is traced in development thinking since the 19th century. Next, a typology of semiperipheral characteristics is presented based on the contributions of dependency and world-systems theorists. One of the most prominent of these characteristics – upward mobility – is then empirically evaluated based on cross-national data from 1970-1995. Statistical results provide no positive support for the upward mobility hypothesis. Furthermore, additional theoretical specification is suggested in order to arrive at a more precise understanding of semiperipherality. Suggestions for future research include highlighting the semiperiphery in regard to recent studies of cross-national inequality and analyzing the relationship between semiperipheral mobility and world-system cycles such as Kondratieff waves and the hegemonic sequence.

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## INTRODUCTION

> We live in an unstable and uncertain world. Since the late 1960s the world-economy has been marked by economic stagnation, rivalry in the interstate system, anarchy in international monetary relations, and outbreaks of political and social instability across the globe. Such anomalous phenomena on so many fronts have swept away not only the stability of the post-World War II world order but also the intellectual and ideological certainties of Western social science.
>
> —William G. Martin, *Semiperipheral States in the World-Economy*

Current global crises within the last decade alone—ethnic wars in Eastern Europe, political and military repression in Africa, continued environmental degradation in South America and Southeast Asia—have cast considerable doubt upon the post-World War II doctrine of "a new world order" and on traditional sociological thought (Saint-Simon, Comte, Durkheim, Spencer) both of which are grounded in a belief in evolutionary social progress. Standing out in sharp contrast to these turbulent events of the last 30 years, the rapid industrialization and economic success of various "developing" or "middle-income" countries have sparked considerable interest among social and political scientists and a burgeoning literature on so-called *newly industrializing countries or economies* (NICs or NIEs respectively). This attention is not surprising because these "intermediate" countries have produced some of the most dramatic social and political changes of the post-war era.

The emergence of economic "success stories" in Japan and Argentina in the 1970s,

South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore in the 1970s and 1980s, and the recent spread of "democratization" in Southern Europe, Eastern Europe, East Asia, Latin America, and South Africa have been interpreted by social scientists in various ways. For some, economic and political change in the NIC/Es represent potentially replicable development patterns. Others have argued that these empirical cases strongly reaffirm the benefits and progress of capitalist development. While others, arriving at a seemingly opposite conclusion, interpret these same empirical cases as representing "a fundamental reorganization of the international economic and political hierarchy -- indeed, nothing less than a rupture in the world order we have known over the last fifty years" (Martin 1989, 3-4).

The conceptual specification of the existence of a "middle-income" *region* of the world-economy as the primary unit of analysis (as opposed to the common theoretical focus on workers, classes, or individual nation-states) has received widespread acknowledgment within sociology since it was formulated by Immanuel Wallerstein in the *Modern World-System* (1974). Based on the notion of a global division of labor that transcends national boundaries, one of the central modifications of the world-system paradigm over previous theories of nation-state development is its emphasis on hierarchical and stable zones of the international landscape (core, semiperiphery, periphery) as structurally distinct and reproducible features roughly analogous to upper, middle, and lower classes within state borders. This theoretical categorization of structural economic and political relationships on a global scale has significantly contributed to the study and understanding of long-term historical trends of nation-state

development in several ways: (1) the structure of individual societies is understood within the context created by a larger social system (a world-system) as well as phenomena internal to them; (2) the analysis of events is understood within the long-term historical context of the world-system which is believed to have existed for at least five-hundred years[1]; and (3) a tripartite distinction (to include a "middle-income" or semiperipheral region) expands the structural relationship among regions and nation-states and overcomes dichotomous formulations of interstate relations (e.g., "rich" versus "poor," "modernized" versus "non-modernized," or "advanced" versus "backward").

Although the concept of semiperiphery has been welcomed by social scientists as an improvement over two-category models of international relations, it has also been criticized for remaining "a prisoner of the ambiguity of its usages" (Aymard 1985, 40). Indeed, one of the main criticisms launched at the world-system paradigm in general is a lack of precision in defining major concepts and therefore a lack of sufficient operational criteria for identifying empirical, or concrete, social referents. The regional distinction of semiperiphery is a particular concern, since it has been used by Wallerstein (1976) to describe contemporary nation-states that comprise roughly two-thirds of the world's population. Arguably, the semiperiphery is the most loosely applied concept in the world-systems literature especially when it is used more as a default reference for cases that are neither distinctly First World (i.e., core) or Third World (i.e., peripheral). Clearly, when used in this fashion, the concept loses considerable utility because it reduces characteristics of semiperipherality to simply non-coreness or non-peripherality.

Acknowledging this concern, one main objective of this thesis is to develop a more

complete (and correspondingly less ambiguous) understanding of the concept semiperiphery. This is partially undertaken in chapter one by exploring the social scientific context from which the notion has emerged over the past century. Most notably, the key theoretical ideas of Karl Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, and Vladimir Lenin are singled out as particularly influential as well as the post-World War II development paradigms commonly referred to as modernization theory, dependency theory, and world-systems theory. It is also important in this endeavor to sift through and make sense of various explications concerning this specific topic. Therefore, a thorough examination and synthesis of the central formulations relating to and concerning the semiperiphery over the past 25 years are presented in chapter two from both the dependency and world-systems schools of thought. Finally, I also put forth a personal explication of the sum and substance of semiperipherality, *in nuce*, and present a common typology of semiperipheral characteristics and processes based on the literature reviewed in chapters one and two.

One abiding theme that permeates the world-systems literature on the semiperiphery is the inherent propensity of constituent members of this region for upward mobility. Surprisingly, this assumption has been scarcely broached as a primary topic of investigation even though it is widely presumed as intrinsic. Although a few notable studies have been put forth by Christopher Chase-Dunn (1988, 1990) and C.P. Terlouw (1992, 1993), further empirical research is needed to assess the validity of this hypothesis. Indeed, the process of measuring upward mobility among semiperipheral actors requires that one first locate this region in time and space based on relevant

operational criteria. Therefore, chapter three discusses various empirical attempts to operationalize the three zones (core, semiperiphery, periphery) of the modern world-system with the intent of arriving at the most appropriate means for testing the mobility hypothesis. Based primarily on the work of C.P. Terlouw (1992, 1993) and Peter Grimes (1996), this analysis maintains the notion of core/periphery hierarchies as relational continuums comprised of infinite points rather than three distinct zones with clearly demarcated boundaries. Likewise, the method used here in establishing operational criteria actively seeks to overcome economic determinism by including political and military dimensions as integral to the measurement process. Finally, chapter four concludes with a discussion of the general utility of the concept semiperiphery, as it is used primarily in the world-systems literature, and proposes directions for further research on the subject.

NOTES

[1] The focus of Wallerstein's work on placing the more visible short-term social events within the context of long-term structural relationships is actually an elaboration of the work of several French historians from the *Annales* school of historical thought, most notably Fernand Braudel. Braudel's notions of society as an *ensemble des emsembles* (an assemblage of interrelated parts which form a larger more global whole) and the unraveling of social-structural transformations over many centuries (*la longue durée*) are shared by Wallerstein in his formulation of the modern world-system. Recently, the temporal genesis of the modern world-system (1450-1640) has been subjected to considerable modification. Prominent theoretical attempts to push back the origins of structural capitalist processes include, among others: Abu-Lughod 1989; Chase-Dunn and Hall 1993, 1997; Ekholm and Friedman 1982; Frank and Gills 1993 (eds.).

# 1

# THE INTELLECTUAL HERITAGE OF WORLD-SYSTEMS THEORY

Economics is a logical starting point in discussing the historical roots of world-systems theory, and for development theory in general, because it played a dominant role. Blomstrom and Hettne (1984) note that early attempts at constructing theories of nation-state development occurred primarily in the field of economics because the concepts of development and economic growth in the social sciences were synonymous. "Classical" economists such as Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and Thomas Malthus shared a common interest in economic development in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Indeed, modern discussions regarding development theory can be traced to several concerns of the "classical" economists. Adam Smith, for example, addressed the causes of increasing productivity; Malthus is well known for his treatment of the problems of population growth; Ricardo analyzed the distribution of production among different classes in society (Blomstrom and Hettne 1984).[1]

## EVOLUTION OF THE MODE OF PRODUCTION: KARL MARX[2]

While Karl Marx built upon economic concepts developed by Ricardo, Smith and others, he developed a distinctive view of economic development that remains influential

throughout the social sciences. His materialistic interpretation of history sought to explain not only economic development of nation-states but the evolution of social organization more generally. For Marx, the process of production is central to the development of society and includes both the *forces* of production (technology, machinery, tools as well as personal experience and knowledge) and the *relations* of production (relations established between individuals and groups in production under different social conditions: slavery, serfdom, and capitalism). The specific form that these two aspects of production assume historically constitute the *mode* of production of a given social organization.

> Each social order is characterized by continuous change in the forces of production, as scientific and technological progress takes place and capital is accumulated. A certain state or level of development of forces of production requires the predominance of a certain type of relations of production. (Oman and Wignaraja 1992, 198-199)

Change in historical societies is the product of conflict and struggle between these two levels of production that continually evolve in discordance.

Throughout history, Marx viewed society as being in a constant state of tension. As the *forces* of production evolve, the *relations* of production that accompany these changes produce a distinct class structure based on those who control (i.e., kings, despots, feudal lords, CEO's, and so on) and those who merely operate (i.e., peasants, serfs, slaves, paid employees, and so on) the *means* of production. The *means* of production is a broad but important concept for Marx. It represents not only the raw materials, land, and property upon which the *forces* of production operate but also the actual productive process, economic decision making, and distribution of goods produced. Those who manage to take control of the *means* of production maintain a superordinate social position in

society over people who do not. When Marx wrote about the capitalist mode of production, he argued that the key social relationship was that between the owners of the *means* of production (the bourgeoisie) and those without any *means* of production of their own (the proletariat). The bourgeoisie's ownership of the *means* of production enabled them to firmly control the "fruits" of labor and the bulk of wealth created by proletarian labor.

At any given time in history, Marx believed that one class exploits the rest of society's members, making the potential for conflict and change ever present. Ultimately, the success of one class is temporary and will eventually be displaced by another that also seeks to change the *relations* of production to better serve its interests.

> As the forces of production evolve . . . the relations of production harden due to class struggle—competition between an oppressed and a ruling class—which becomes more intense. The ruling class, which benefits as a group from the existing structure of property relations (i.e., the legal or political means by which one group maintains control over the means of production) resists change, while the oppressed class that would benefit from a modification in property relations asserts itself and tries to gain political power. (Oman and Wignaraja 1992, 198-99)

Ultimately, when the level of tension in society reaches a boiling point, social revolution destroys the existing *relations* of production and society evolves to another *mode* of production. This advance in social organization is based on a new system of the *relations* of production that is temporarily aligned with the *forces* of production. But even after this adjustment has been made, the struggle between the two segments of production continues, as does the process of change (increasing conflict, revolution, disintegration, evolution, conflict, and so on), but at a higher stage of economic and social development. Applying this schema to cover the whole of human history, Marx identified the

successive *modes* of production as follows: primitive/communal, ancient, feudal, capitalist, socialist, communist.

Clearly, Marx viewed the historical progress of social development as moving along an evolutionary path. This idea was not new at the time, but the emphasis on inherent tension and conflict was novel. This notion, as well as Marx's rather detailed claims and concepts, became influential to the strategies and assumptions of structuralist development theories following World War II. Today, proponents of dependency and world-systems theory, for example, share Marx's concern for the rise and spread of capitalism in the modern era and agree that the nature and functioning of capitalism is central to any understanding of contemporary society. Likewise, both theories follow Marx in viewing capitalism as an inherently exploitative system that has been the cause of social conflict and economic imperialism over the last five hundred years.

## IMPERIALISM: THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF CAPITALIST EXPANSIONISM[3]

*Merchant Capital: Rosa Luxemburg.* Rosa Luxemburg was the first Marxist to produce a general theory of the effects of capitalist expansionism (i.e., imperialism) on less developed regions of the globe. In *The Accumulation of Capital* (1913) she described the destruction of these regions through the penetration of capitalist practices from industrialized regions. Luxemburg's theory drew attention to crises of "under-consumption" in industrialized capitalist countries which occurred when the supply of consumer goods grew faster than the demand for those goods. She argued that capitalism

was an attempt to solve this crisis by seeking new markets in the less developed regions of the world. Initially, the influx of merchant capital (i.e., money, machinery, and technology from wealthy countries) into newly established colonies postponed capitalist development by competing with local industry and therefore reinforcing indigenous, non-capitalist *relations* of production. But, eventually, it overwhelmingly spread to industrial and production spheres and promoted the development of capitalist *forces* of production similar to those found in the imperialist countries. Ultimately, as the capitalist mode of production incorporates new markets on a global scale, it expands the productive forces and, concurrently, circulates the problem of underconsumption. Thus, Luxemburg concluded that the imperialist conquest of less developed societies only postpones the crisis in industrialized capitalist societies (Oman and Wignaraja 1992).

*Monopoly Capital: V.I. Lenin.* Vladimir Lenin argued in *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1917) that capitalism had reached its "monopoly" phase due to increasing tendencies toward concentration, centralization, and intense competition. This new (and final) stage of capitalist development was characterized by the transformation of large capitalist interests (located in "advanced" capitalist societies) into large, monopolistic corporations funded and controlled by a small number of financial firms. Like Luxemburg, Lenin argued that capitalism was faced with a crisis. But instead of viewing this crisis as the result of underconsumption, he believed that capitalism in "advanced" countries was "over-ripe" because it could not generate new investment opportunities as quickly as it generated new capital.

> Maintaining the rate of profit required continued economic growth to provide investment opportunities. Because of the extremes of wealth and poverty in [advanced] capitalist countries, the vast bulk of the population lacked sufficient purchasing power to absorb the production generated by continued investment. If capitalists invested solely in the domestic market, they faced declining profits because of insufficient market demand. At the same time, profits were further threatened if increased production drove up the price of raw materials. (Shannon 1996, 12)

According to Lenin, the solution to the problem was to open up new markets and new investment opportunities in "less advanced" regions where the price of land and wages was low, raw materials were cheap, and therefore profits were higher. The export of financial and industrial capital to increase profits overseas slowed accumulation in the domestic markets of "advanced" capitalist countries but also accelerated development in the recipient countries, though in a rather exploitative way. Once a new region of investment was found, the colonized country took on the role of providing cheap raw materials and cheap labor while simultaneously importing expensive industrial goods to spur development. Furthermore, foreign investment was taken in at the expense of investment in local enterprises, which suffered financially, and subsequently led to greatly uneven development of the colonized country as a whole. So for Lenin, the expansionist tendencies of monopoly capitalism, manifest in imperial conquest by "advanced" countries, resulted in the *under*development of pre-capitalist societies.

The emergence of an exploitative relationship between advanced capitalist and pre-capitalist societies, which was identified by Luxemburg and Lenin, continues to be a central concern for dependency and world-systems theorists. They agree with Lenin that the economic relationships that resulted from imperialist expansion were (and continue to be) a key element of Western success. But they do not agree that this phenomenon is a

characteristic of a particular *stage* of capitalism in the nineteenth century. Rather, dependency and world-systems theorists contend that regional exploitation has existed throughout the centuries-long spread of capitalism.[4]

## HISTORICAL CONTINGENCY AND THE AFTERMATH OF WORLD WAR II

Intellectual efforts to produce a distinct account of nation-state development during the last 50 years were greatly influenced by the reshuffling of the global landscape that took place after World War II. Indeed, the general interest in the development of nation-states following World War II became the concern of economists, social scientists, political analysts, and policy makers alike. Oman and Wignaraja (1992) state that interest in development grew out of several key historical events. One was the disruption of international trade due to major wars between 1914-1945 and the Great Depression, which led to the transition toward "inward-oriented growth" or "import-substituting industrialization" in some developing countries (most of them in Latin America). Perón in Argentina and Cárdenas in Mexico, for example, both encouraged *local* production of manufactures for the *local* market in an attempt to modernize and develop their national economies.

Another key factor was the restructuring of alliances among the industrialized countries and the creation of global organizations during and immediately after World War II. Robert Schaeffer (1997) refers to this restructuring of the global political landscape as "the new interstate system." Created primarily by the United States and the

Soviet Union, Schaeffer states that this system was both "republican" in that both superpowers opposed imperialism and promoted the creation of independent, self-governing states, and "developmentalist" in that both advocated trade and monetary polices that would promote global economic growth and advance the development of individual states. To achieve these ends, both the United Nations and Bretton Woods were organized by U.S. officials to address the problems presented by recurrent world war and economic depression. "The United Nations was the central political institution designed to prevent war. Bretton Woods was the chief economic institution designed to prevent economic depression. Although small at the outset, these two institutions were significant nonetheless" (Schaeffer 1997, 10). Indeed, the collective power of the United Nations, backed by U.S. hegemonic power, eventually shattered colonial empires while the Bretton Woods initiatives led to the establishment of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Soon thereafter, the postwar break-up of colonial empires, which resulted in independence for colonies in much of Africa and Asia, coupled with the onset of the "Cold War," induced a cautious concern in the First World regarding the economic and political future of newly independent territories. Communist revolutions in China (1949) and Cuba (1959) made capitalist countries worry that the social and economic condition of poor countries made them vulnerable to communist revolutions as well. At this time, private corporations also became involved in the development process of the Third World for reasons of their own, which included the following: (1) to promote local political

stability and thereby reduce labor unrest; and (2) to tap into new markets for their products and acquire cheap raw materials in peripheral countries.

Finally, the vast increase in the availability of information on world poverty was "a factor which undoubtedly contributed to the growth of worldwide concern over the problems of poverty and human suffering prevalent in so many Third World countries" (Oman and Wignaraja 1992, 3-4). Various international and multilateral organizations such as the World Bank, the United Nations, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) began for the first time to collect systematic data on economic conditions in "developing" countries after World War II.

These historical events and the theoretical ideas enumerated above have been particularly influential in the evolution of development thinking in the twentieth century. Within the last 50 years, the attention given to issues of global economic development has been substantial. Three of the most prominent strains of development thinking in the social sciences following World War II have been the modernization, dependency, and world-systems perspectives. Although similar in their fundamental interest in uneven development, each perspective offers different explanations of its dynamics. These differences are accentuated in order to convey a theoretical evolution as well as to highlight the conceptual specification of the semiperiphery in world-systems theory as a significant modification of both dependency and modernization theory.

## MODERNIZATION THEORY

Modernization theory was one of the main intellectual products of the post-war era that was concerned with the economic development (or underdevelopment) of the Third World. Theoretical and empirical efforts to explain economic prosperity in "the West" and sluggish growth in "the South" originated in the United States. This interest grew out of concern that weaker regions of the globe were susceptible to communist revolution.

> The study of modernization began as a coherent, distinct field in America because the United States suddenly found itself the leader of the Western world and the only defender of its economic and ideological interests against the Soviet Union and what then seemed to be a growing, united world Communist revolutionary movement. (Chirot 1981, 259)

Modernization theory adopted the intellectual concerns of both classical evolutionary theory and structural-functionalism. Both perspectives provided several key ideas that were central to this perspective: (1) social change is unidirectional and proceeds from a primitive state to an advanced one; (2) evolutionary progress is good because it advances humanity and civilization; (3) the rate of social change is slow and gradual; and (4) the changes produced by this evolutionary process are necessary and therefore functional to the stability of national societies.

Prominent theorists in the field took pains to contrast the differences between "traditional" and "modernized" societies, usually highlighting the benefits of the latter. For example, Wilbert Moore's "Sequential" Model of Modernization outlined at length the necessary conditions for industrialization (e.g., bureaucratic administration and motivation toward achievement and innovation), the concomitants and consequences of

industrialization (e.g., higher skill levels in the labor force and cultural heterogeneity), and the dynamics of industrial societies (e.g., continual specialization and technological change).[5] Others, like Marion Levy, specified the differences between "relatively modernized" and "relatively nonmodernized" societies. Alvin So (1990) summarizes Levy's specifications as follows:

- *Nonmodernized societies* are characterized by a low degree of specialization and interdependency of organization; cultural norms of tradition, particularism, and functional diffuseness; low degree of centralization; relatively little emphasis on money circulation and market; precedence of family norms such as nepotism; and one-way flow of goods and services from rural to urban areas.
- *Modernized societies*, by comparison, are characterized by a high degree of specialization and interdependency of organization; cultural norms of rationality, universalism, and functional specificity; high degree of specialization; relatively higher emphasis on money circulation and market; the need to insulate bureaucracy from other contexts; and two-way flow of goods and services between towns and villages.

Schooled in the functionalist tradition, Neil Smelser viewed the social structures of "traditional" societies as "undifferentiated" and therefore inefficient. Undifferentiated social structures, such as the institution of the family, he argued, are inefficient because they are complicated and multifunctional. In traditional society the family is large and multigenerational and primarily responsible for the functions of production, education, welfare, and religion. In modern society, the corporation takes over the function of employment, formal schools take over the function of education, and the government

takes over the function of welfare. Therefore, the modern family has a much simpler and more efficient structure by losing many of its old functions and by becoming small and nuclear; it has undergone structural differentiation. For Smelser, modernization involves the process of structural differentiation because, through the modernization process, formerly complicated social structures that perform multiple functions are divided into numerous specialized structures that are more efficient because they perform only one function each (So 1990, 26-27).

During this period, social scientific theories of development and progress were strongly influenced by the international success of the United States immediately following World War II. Theoretical formulations strongly emphasized the necessity of Western cultural diffusion and the benefits of adopting the "modernizing" techniques of established world powers; the "ideal society" was the United States and its prosperity became the standard of success in the world-economy. Indeed, modernization theory's view of long-term historical change was conceived of as a natural progress of universal and socially desirable stages that all societies go through on their evolutionary path from "primitive" and "undifferentiated" to "industrial" and "modern" (Shannon 1996, 2-8).

Modernization theorists received generous support from the United States government and private foundations through the mid-1960s and even created the journal *Economic Development and Cultural Change* to publish their findings. Its immediate legacy to the study of nation-state development lay in its efforts to create a rigorous, scientific study of global progress, and add to the current base of empirical knowledge about industrialization, economic growth, and democratization (Chirot 1981). The

modernization emphasis on unilinear development and evolutionary progress, however, failed to identify the stable existence of median or middle-ground states due to the basic assumption that the wealth of the West could be obtained by the rest of the globe if they adopted modern capitalist technologies and social structures. "According to modernization theory, intermediate positions [such as the semiperiphery] are temporary because they are *transitional*: States come to occupy intermediate positions on their way from backwardness to modernity" (Arrighi and Drangel 1986, 10). Eventually, critics would castigate modernization studies for overemphasizing the degree of orderliness, cooperation, and stability among societies and for failing to recognize instances of abrupt social change and exploitation as well as the uniqueness of individual societies throughout history (So 1990; Shannon 1996). Just as noteworthy was the subsequent backlash against their claims delivered by the intellectual community (especially outside the United States). These intellectuals, many of whom came from Latin America, moved beyond modernization theory's Eurocentric bias toward a distinctly Third World perspective.

## DEPENDENCY THEORY

As a systematic attempt to overcome the Western bias of modernization theory, dependency theory tried to explain why Third World countries were unable to develop and modernize their economies like countries in the First World. Strongly influenced by Lenin's theory of imperialism, dependency theorists focused on the exploitative nature of

economic relationships between developing regions and advanced capitalist countries. Whereas Lenin described the wave of European colonization in the Third World during the second half of the nineteenth century, the dependency school attempted to specify more completely the nature of exploitation in the twentieth century as a result of the expansion of capitalism over the last five hundred years (Shannon 1996). In stark contrast to its theoretical predecessor, the dependency perspective represented the point of view of developing countries and issued a firm challenge to the "intellectual hegemony" of American modernizationists. Instead of viewing all societies as progressing along an evolutionary path towards modernity, dependency theory viewed the development of nation-states as necessarily polarized between *center* and *peripheral* regions which resulted from the exploitative nature of capitalist expansion and capital accumulation in the modern era. Alvin So (1990) argues that the emergence of the dependency school in the 1960s was a response to three main factors: (1) the failure of the U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) during the 1950s and 1960s; (2) the crisis of orthodox Marxism; and (3) the decline of the modernization school in the United States.

Headed by Raul Prebisch in the 1950s, ECLA's primary goal was to spur development in Latin America through industrialization. Prebisch viewed the widespread specialization in "outward-oriented" growth that had prevailed in Latin America prior to World War I as the main cause of economic inequality with the First World. What this practice produced were stagnating economies that were structured around the *export* of "primary" products (e.g., raw materials and foodstuffs) and the *import* of manufactured products. This led to the underdevelopment of Latin American economies because,

according to Prebisch, modern production techniques were acquired later than in wealthy industrial centers who continually specialized in and profited from the most advanced technology (Oman and Wignaraja 1992). This contention was manifested in ECLA reports that chronicled unequal terms of trade between "industrialized" and "developing" countries and the polarizing tendencies of the global market that produced starkly different economic regions. These two regions were referred to as *the center* (advanced capitalist regions) and *the periphery* (underdeveloped regions).[6]

Prebisch believed that Latin America's continued reliance on exports of raw materials would inevitably result in chronic unemployment, recurring external deficits, and deteriorating terms of trade which would further impede economic growth. Like Keynesian economists, he argued that state intervention was necessary to plan and coordinate investment and deal with the vicissitudes of the global market. So, to combat this situation of underdevelopment in Latin America, Prebisch promoted the immediate industrialization of this region and an end to the perceived "one-sided" global division of labor through various measures such as import-substitution (the substitution of current imported goods by domestic production of those goods), tariff protection from foreign competition, and increased government participation as coordinators of this development process (Blomstrom and Hettne 1984; So 1990).

As So relates, the ECLA strategy was overly optimistic in assuming that industrialization would immediately solve the problems of development in Latin America.

> Many populist regimes in Latin America tried out the ECLA developmental strategy of protectionism and industrialization through import substitution in the 1950s . . .

> However, the brief economic expansion in the 1950s quickly turned into economic stagnation. In the early 1960s, Latin America was plagued by unemployment, inflation, currency devaluation, declining terms of trade, and other economic problems . . . Needless to say, many Latin American researchers were disappointed. They became disillusioned with both the ECLA program and the American modernization school, which proved unable to explain economic stagnation, political repression, and the widening gap between rich and poor countries. (So 1990, 91-2)

The failure of the ECLA program and its relatively moderate prescriptions for developmental success prompted dependency thinkers to devise a more radical approach, one that was strongly influenced by the success of the Chinese and Cuban revolutions and which led to the adoption of a new strain of intellectual thought: *neo-Marxism*. The neo-Marxists in Latin American disagreed with orthodox Marxists that a bourgeois revolution must take place *before* a socialist revolution. Orthodox Marxists typically advocated a strategy of two-stage revolution (a bourgeois revolution first, a proletarian revolution second). But the neo-Marxists argued that the peasantry in Latin America and throughout the Third World was ready for socialist revolution now and maintained that the bourgeoisie was "the creation and tool of imperialism, incapable of fulfilling its role as the liberator of the forces of production" (Foster-Carter in So 1990, 95).

Dependency theory definitely shared the central assumptions of the ECLA that the international division of labor was polarized into two distinct regions and that unequal terms of trade existed in the global market. But, proponents did not advocate the same solutions as the ECLA or orthodox Marxists. Dependency theorists contended that the historical development of peripheral economies throughout centuries of capitalist imperialism and exploitation made their respective routes to achieve modernization much different than those of Western capitalist economies. Therefore, what was needed was

*not* an infusion of Western industrialization or the gradual unfolding of a global communist movement. Rather, dependency theorists sought to uncover and explain the historical "development of underdevelopment" of peripheral regions and fundamentally change the unequal relationships that had developed over the centuries-long expansion of capitalism.

As a result, many different accounts of the nature and causes of "dependent development" in the periphery were advanced by dependency theorists. Nonetheless, advocates of this perspective shared the following assumptions (Blomstrom and Hettne 1984; So 1990): (1) dependency is a general process that applies to all Third World countries who participate in the international division of labor of transnational capitalism; (2) dependency is primarily an external condition imposed from the outside; the vestiges of colonialism and the polarizing tendencies of the international division of labor provide the greatest obstacles to development in the Third World not lack of capital or entrepreneurial skills; (3) dependency results from the flow of economic surplus from peripheral areas to the center through unequal terms of trade; (4) underdevelopment and development are two aspects of a single process of capital accumulation; based on the nature of capital accumulation, one process implies the other by definition and necessarily leads to regional polarization in the world-economy; therefore, dependency is a fundamental feature of regional polarization in the international division of labor since the center benefits by virtue of unequal exchange with the periphery; and (5) dependency is incompatible with stable, genuine development; as long as the periphery is economically linked to the center through the international division of labor, it is doomed

to underdevelopment.

Although several prominent dependency theorists now align themselves with the world-systems perspective (most notably Andre Gunder Frank and Samir Amin), accounts of dependent development continue to emanate from the Third World. Without question, the dependency perspective provided a solid foundation for the emergence of world-systems theory in proposing a world-economy structured in core-periphery relations. But while it differed from modernization theory in most respects, dependency theory maintained a dichotomous model of global actors in the world-economy (center versus periphery) and therefore precluded the existence of a stable intermediate region.[7] "(A)ccording to dependency theory, intermediate positions are temporary because they are *residual*: The polarizing tendencies of the world-economy will ultimately pull states in intermediate positions toward the center or toward the periphery" (Arrighi and Drangel 1986, 10; emphasis in the original). According to Arrighi and Drangel (1986), this has led to two main criticisms of dependency accounts: (1) they are too narrowly focused on a special case (such as Latin America) and therefore deny consideration of significant "middle-income" countries such as the Soviet Union, which (prior to the fall of communism) was neither dependent nor subordinate and, conversely, countries such as Canada, which would not be classified as peripheral but nonetheless exhibit features of "structural dependency"; and (2) focusing on individual cases of "dependent development" leaves the analysis open to "fallacies of composition," so that what may be true for individual states may not be true for groups of states.

## WORLD-SYSTEMS THEORY

The introduction of the world-systems perspective is commonly associated with the publication of *The Modern World-System, Volume I* by Immanuel Wallerstein in 1974. The central claim of Wallerstein's work (and of world-systems theory in general) is that an identifiable social system exists that transcends the boundaries of individual societies and nation-states. In this first of three volumes (and countless other publications), Wallerstein presents as his unit of analysis a grand social system comprised of relatively stable economic and political relationships that have encompassed much of the globe for five hundred years. Following dependency theory, the economic relationships of this system are characterized by a single, worldwide division of labor that is maintained by unequal exchange in the world market. But instead of viewing this global labor force as composed of isolated and independent national economies that just happen to trade with one another, Wallerstein's world-economy unifies multiple cultures, states, and societies into one integrated economic system (Shannon 1996). "Wallerstein follows dependency theorists in assuming a world-economy structured in core-periphery relations," argue Arrighi and Drangel (1986, 11).

> These relations, however, do not link national or regional economies, as in most versions of dependency theory, but economic activities structured in commodity chains that cut across state boundaries . . . The dichotomy [of core and periphery] is meant to designate the unequal distribution of rewards among the various activities that constitute the single overarching division of labor defining and bounding the world-economy. All these activities are assumed to be integrated in commodity chains. (Arrighi and Drangel 1986, 11,16)[8]

The political organization of the world-system consists of an interstate system of

competing, sovereign nation-states, none of which have gained exclusive authority over the entire region of the world-economy. To Wallerstein, the existence of multiple strong states prevents any one from seizing control of all the territory of weaker states (thus avoiding the type of conquest found in regional empires prior to the sixteenth century). World-systems theory maintains that the system of interstate competition and capitalism (creating the global division of labor) reinforce one another; the existence of a single world-state would destroy the independence of the capitalist class (i.e., their ability to freely pursue the accumulation of capital and profit) and therefore capitalism itself; at the same time, competition among capitalists of different nation-states gives no one state permanent economic advantage (Shannon 1996).

Wallerstein argues that throughout history two main types of world-systems have existed. One was the world empire and the other is the modern capitalist world-system. A world empire is characterized by an intersocietal division of labor encompassed by a single, dominant political entity where the extraction of surplus is achieved through various forms of political and military domination (conquest, tributes, plunder, etc.). A capitalist world-economy is characterized by forms of economic domination (unequal terms of trade, exploitation of labor, etc.) for surplus extraction and an intersocietal division of labor organized into a multicentric, interstate system of unequal and competing nations-states. It should also be pointed out that Wallerstein's definition of a world-system considers only those intersocietal networks that are multicultural and that exchange "necessities" (items needed for survival such as foodstuffs and raw materials) as opposed to "preciosities" (tangible/material symbols of status, wealth, and/or power).

Therefore, much of the ancient and prehistoric history of small-scale, intersocietal interaction does not fall under the Wallersteinian definition of a world-system (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997).

According to Wallerstein, the growth of the modern capitalist world-system emerged between 1450 and 1650 ("the long sixteenth century") as a response to a crisis in Western Europe stemming from the bubonic plague, rising inflation, and the resultant "crisis of feudalism." The historical detail of the emergence of Wallerstein's modern world-system is presented at length in the first of his three volumes on the subject. Thus, the summary that follows is merely a brief synopsis:

As the plague began to decimate the European population, peasant survivors of the plague were faced with a high demand for their labor and began to ask for higher wages from their feudal lords. In the meantime, as the Spanish extended their influence around the globe, explorers brought back considerable wealth (mainly bullion) for the empire that began to stockpile. This combination of higher wages and an excess of bullion led to an inflation of the Western European economy that had an adverse effect on wealthy land owners who relied on a fixed income produced by peasants who worked on the land. With rising prices and a stagnant income, feudal lords dismissed the peasants from their land to pursue money-making endeavors on their own (e.g., cattle and sheep herding for wool and cotton production). Likewise, existing rulers of Western Europe resorted to exploration and piracy as well as the establishment of overseas settlements and colonies based on slavery in an attempt to make or steal more wealth. This geographical expansion through exploration and colonization in the sixteenth century generated

increasing goods, wealth, and trade for this region. Thus, Wallerstein points out that Western Europe was able to shape the political map of the world and enforce its capitalist exploits abroad by enlisting self-serving economic measures such as taxation and deficit spending as well as through military advances such as gun powder, cannons, armadas, and horse driven armies (Wallerstein 1974).

These explorations and conquests were followed by the economic development and domination of strong states that were able to take advantage of their expanding wealth and power to distort the world market in favor of their interests and exploit weaker countries through extraction of raw materials and surplus. This resulted in polarizing the nations of the earth into a global geographical (axial) division of labor comprised of three groups: the core, the periphery, and the semiperiphery. In general, the core is comprised of economically and politically dominant states that specialize in producing advanced goods with sophisticated technologies and highly mechanized methods of production ("capital intensive" production). Conversely, the periphery is comprised of economically and politically weak states that specialize in production with less technological sophistication and workers who employ little advanced machinery ("labor intensive" production). The semiperiphery consists of relatively intermediate levels of capital intensive and labor intensive production.

Wallerstein points out that although the nature of economic activities changes over time, the nature of the system *as a whole* remains fairly static. Therefore, it is possible for individual states to "move up" or "move down" this three-tiered hierarchy (i.e., from core to semiperiphery or vice versa) but all states cannot "progress" or "regress" at the

same time because the system functions by virtue of an unequal mix of core and peripheral activities; economic advance in the world-system is a zero-sum affair such that the gains achieved by one state must be made at the expense of another. Thus, according to Wallerstein's conceptualization this axial division of labor has remained more or less constant throughout the history of the capitalist world-economy and plays a key role in maintaining its stability and legitimacy.

Whereas most modernization, dependency, and neo-Marxist thinkers have concentrated their focus on individual nation-states, classes, or workers, Wallerstein's modern world-system is defined by the complex interrelationship of states that have evolved in a particular way because of their position and relation (both politically and economically) to other states in the world-system over the last five hundred years. Indeed, the world-systems perspective owes an intellectual debt to dependency theorists who acknowledged the polarizing tendencies of the capitalist world-economy into center and peripheral regions, but Wallerstein criticizes them for failing to recognize the complex interrelationship of interstate (i.e., political) development together with an axial division of labor (including the semiperiphery) as the primary explanation of change. If modernization theory can be said to have specified *intra*state relations (the endogenous composition of a particular nation-state as "advanced" or "backward"), and dependency theory as that of *inter*state relations (uneven relationship of center versus peripheral states), then the world-systems perspective may be described as specifying world-system relations (stable, reproducible economic and political relationships on a global scale) (Terlouw 1992).

NOTES

[1] The historical contribution of economic theorists to modern development theory is no doubt vast. Blomstrom and Hettne (1984) identify the importance of classical, neo-classical, and Keynesian ideas in the history of economic thought as well as the counter-intellectual claims of the structuralist and neo-Marxist camps. Although the evolution of economic thought over the last 200 years may be said to mirror that of development thought, the confines of this chapter cover only what concepts are considered to be of primary relevance to the origin of the world-systems paradigm and the overall research agenda.

[2] The following discussion is based on Bee (1974, 37), Oman and Wignaraja (1992, 198-200), and Shannon (1996, 8-11).

[3] The following discussion is based on Oman and Wignaraja (1992, 201-205) and Shannon (1996, 12-13).

[4] As mentioned in footnote #1, some theorists (most notably Andre Gunder Frank) claim that capitalist tendencies have been evident on a global scale for 5,000 years. Since Wallerstein's initial time scale has been utilized and elaborated upon for over twenty years, the concern of this thesis for brevity and clarity necessitate considering only prior Wallersteinian formulations.

[5] See Shannon (1996) for a concise summary of Moore's "Sequential" Model of Modernization.

[6] This historically specific understanding of development and underdevelopment is commonly referred to as the *center-periphery paradigm* and has been articulated quite thoroughly by dependency theorists. The summary provided in this thesis is abridged and greatly simplified. Notable accounts on this theme can be found in Amin 1975, Cardoso 1973, Cardoso and Falleto [1971] 1979, Emmanuel 1972, and Frank 1967.

[7] Although both are considered as elaborations of dependency theory, Marini's (1965, 1969, 1972) discussion of Brazilian "subimperialism" and Galtung's (1972) "go-between nations" can be considered as preliminary conceptualizations of an intermediate regions of the world-economy. These two theorists will be covered in the following chapter.

[8] Terence Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein describe commodity chains as follows: "Take an ultimate consumable item and trace back the set of inputs that culminated in the item–the prior transformations, the raw materials, the transportation mechanisms, the labor input into each of the material processes, the food inputs into the labor. This linked set of processes we call a commodity chain" (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1977, 128).

# 2

# SEMIPERIPHERAL ATTRIBUTES: FORMULATING A COMMON TYPOLOGY

The conceptual elaboration of the semiperiphery as a structural and stable constituent of the modern world-economy has been one of the major contributions of world-systems theory to the study of historical capitalism, and is a significant modification of twentieth century development theories that emphasized mere polar opposites of the development spectrum (i.e., advanced versus backward, bourgeoisie versus proletariat, industrialized versus non-industrialized, center versus peripheral). Following World War II, it became clear that the increasingly complex international division of labor produced various cases whose position in the expanding world-economy could no longer be explained simply as a product of absolute superiority or absolute exploitation. East Asian examples after 1945 such as Taiwan are prime illustrations of nation-states that have *not* remained dependent and impoverished over the long-term. Likewise, attempts to withdraw from exploitative relationships with the core, such as the former Soviet Union, have not necessarily yielded the prompt economic growth that dependency theory predicts (Shannon 1996). The notion of the semiperiphery in world-systems theory is a conceptual insight that attempts to overcome these historical inaccuracies and account for why some areas are able to "ascend" (at least partially) from dependency status, as well as what opportunities and strategies are used by local interest groups and elites in "middle-

income" regions to improve their position in the world-economy. Current usages of the Wallersteinian model in the analysis of pre-1500 world-systems also have noted the structural significance of the semiperiphery in understanding long-term, large-scale social change.

To arrive at a more thorough understanding of the concept "semiperiphery," and how it has been applied by scholars, this chapter presents an examination of the major efforts to conceptualize an "intermediate" region of the world-economy, which includes past and present formulations from dependency and world-systems theorists. Following this, I will synthesize the efforts of chapters one and two into a condensed and concise account of the semiperiphery and submit a common typology of characteristics that are most frequently used when referring to this region. It is with this effort that I hope to rectify criticisms of ambiguous usage.

## DEPENDENCY FORMULATIONS

*Brazilian Subimperialism: Ruy Marini.* Brazilian sociologist and dependency theorist Ruy Mauro Marini became a strong advocate for the necessity of socialist revolution in his home country following the military coup of 1964. According to Marini, the military dictatorship was a response to the economic crisis affecting the Brazilian economy between 1962 and 1967. The military elite that led the coup was different from previous ones, he believed, because it presented a "total economic-political scheme" that actively fused the interests of the military with that of big business, and aligned Brazil in new

ways with the "imperialist" policies of the United States. Marini called this scheme *subimperialism*, "the form which dependency capitalism assumes upon reaching the stage of monopolies and finance capital" (Marini 1972, 15).

From the perspective of big business, the crisis of the Brazilian economy lay in the inability of the durable goods industry (which produced consumer as well as capital goods) to expand further because the domestic market was not big enough. Previous efforts to solve this problem relied on the redistribution of income (through wage increases for example) to revitalize the domestic market. But these policies were more conducive to medium and small enterprises (which produced mainly non-durable goods such as foodstuffs and clothing), than for the durable goods industry, which represented big business. Marini viewed the domestic policies of the military dictatorship in the 1960s as responding wholeheartedly to the interests of "big capital." "In general," he argued, "they depended almost exclusively on increasing concentration of income and its productive sources, either through measures designed to reduce wages or through facilitating the more or less violent absorption of smaller enterprises by larger ones (credit, taxation, etc.)" (Marini 1972, 16). For Marini, the implementation of policy based on support for big business required a restructuring of Brazilian capitalism and the creation of a production structure capable of competing in the international market. This objective led to several new government policies: (1) "privatization" (the removal of industry from government ownership or control); (2) the development of finance capital, through finance companies and investment banks, with strong foreign participation; and (3) the destruction of small and medium enterprises, or their absorption by big capital.

In terms of foreign policy, Marini contended that the economic stagnation of the 1960s produced a "realization crisis" for the new government that produced two dominant philosophies, one economic and one geo-political. Economically, the military regime emphasized the need for opening new markets for the products of the durable-goods industry throughout Latin America and, at the same time, creating investment opportunities in Brazil for interested monopolies and finance capitalists. Geo-politically, the military regime firmly believed that, because of its geographic position, Brazil could not escape North American influence. Therefore, no alternative remained but to align the country with U.S. policies in Latin America.

Marini contended that these two objectives in Brazilian foreign policy should be understood collectively as *continental interdependence*, which was not simply a submission to Washington or a conversion of Brazil into a colony of the United States, but a "conscious acceptance of its integration with North American imperialism" (Marini 1965, 21). In exchange for this realignment, the United States recognized that the expansion of capitalism (and therefore of U.S. imperialist economic policies) in Latin America should be exercised exclusively by Brazil as a kind of "quasi-monopoly." Rather than trying to integrate Brazil into the North American economy, the Brazilian military government endeavored to become the center from which Western capitalism would radiate in Latin America. "It is not a question of passively accepting North American power (although the actual correlation of forces often leads to that result), but rather of collaborating actively with imperialist expansion, assuming in this expansion the position of a key nation" (Marini 1965, 22). For Marini, the reorganization of the

Brazilian economy in line with the U.S. example (characterized by capital accumulation, monopoly of growth, and the export of capital and investment abroad) created the opportunity for Brazil to become a *regional* power in Latin America and a conduit for Western capitalist expansion in this region—a development he viewed as part of the overall "imperialist process of integration" worldwide.

Like many dependency theorists, Marini denounced the economic and political policies of the United States (and the Western world in general) toward developing countries as elitist, self-serving, and exploitative. Undoubtedly, his rather strong opinions of Brazilian capitalism (and Western capitalism in general) are consistent with the caustic tone of Latin American dependency writing in this era. "Brazilian capitalism is a monster, but a logical monster: if popular consumption does not provide a market for what the most dynamic sectors of industry produce, so much the worse for popular consumption; capitalism will continue to accumulate without it" (Marini 1972, 20). Although Marini's analysis of Brazilian affairs in the 1960s remains one of many individual case studies of dependent development in the periphery, his unique description of the development of "subimperialism" in Brazil became an important concept in dependency thinking and served as a precursor for future consideration of intermediate roles in the global economy. Likewise, the acknowledgment of the role of a *facilitator* in Western capitalist expansion and/or a *regional* center of power geographically (acting in between ultimate exploiter and absolute exploited) was integrated by Wallerstein in his conceptualization of the semiperiphery of the modern world-system.

*"Go-Between" Nations: Johan Galtung.*[1] During the 1960s and early 1970s, theoretical discussion of the structural relationships between rich and poor countries was advanced not only by dependency theorists but also by a number of radical peace researchers concerned not simply with international economic relationships but with the relationships of structural power in general. The concept of *structural violence* was used by Johan Galtung (1972, 1976) to argue that, in addition to direct military violence, various means of exploitation, undernourishment, and oppression were another form of violence whose origins could be traced back to the social structure itself. During the 1970s, various peace researchers voiced the need for a special theory of violence that took into account the structural nature of conflicts at all levels (local, national, and international). Exploitative relationships (i.e., relationships where one "collectivity" is systematically favored at the other's expense) were considered to be the most significant examples of structural violence whether they existed between members of a small town, large segments of a national population, or between developed and underdeveloped countries. Naturally, the conflict solutions discussed in this context grew out of the assumption that tension and violence could not be reduced unless the relation of exploitation was fundamentally changed (Blomstrom and Hettne 1984).

Like many of the dependency scholars at this time, Johan Galtung described a global structure of *imperialism* as a special type of dominance system that imposed its own historically specific form of structural violence. However, one feature of Galtung's analysis that sets him apart from traditional dependency writing was his argument that imperialism was not necessarily associated with capitalism.

> Our view is not reductionist in the traditional sense pursued in Marxist-Leninist theory, which conceived of imperialism as an economic relationship under private capitalism, motivated by the need for expanding markets, and which bases the theory of dominance on a theory of imperialism . . . According to this view, imperialism is a more general structural relationship between two collectivities, and has to be understood at a general level in order to be understood and counteracted in its more specific manifestations. (Galtung 1971, 94)

His notion of imperialism described a sophisticated type of dominance relation that existed at many levels of social interaction. In addition, Galtung emphasized that imperialism was just one way that a nation, or any other collectivity, dominated another. For him, imperialism was merely "a species in a genus of dominance and power relationships" (Galtung 1971, 94).

In this sense, Galtung believed it was misleading to argue that imperialism was solely comprised of international relationships *between* collectivities (such as economic exchange between center and peripheral nations). The structural imperialism that he described was a combination of *inter-* and *intra-*national relations and has multiple dimensions. Indeed, Galtung emphasized not only the economic dimension of imperialism but also its political, military, communications, and cultural dimensions. Neither of these, he argues, was more basic than the other or preceded the others. Rather, imperialism could start from any dimension and should be examined regarding the extent to which it generated interaction patterns of dominance.

> These dimensions are all parts of a *generalized imperialism*, which in Galtung's opinion are convertable, i.e., they may merge into each other. Political imperialism may, for instance, change into economic imperialism via 'dictated terms of trade'; the imperialism of communication may change into cultural imperialism via control of the flow of information, and cultural imperialism may change into economic imperialism via the export of development models. (Blomstrom and Hettne 1984, 177; emphasis in the original)

Galtung later sought to take into account the particular form of imperialism as exercised by the Soviet Union over its subordinate countries in the mid-1970s by introducing the concept of *social imperialism* and utilizing Marini's concept of *subimperialism*. Galtung defined social imperialism as a center-periphery relation in which the center forced a certain social structure upon the periphery and created its own center region in the peripheral country to serve as its "bridgehead." The form of exploitation inherent in this process consisted not of an exchange of commodities between center and periphery *per se* but, rather, "between being the fertile soil on which a structure is implanted or imprinted, and being the willing exporter of that structure" (Galtung 1976, 154). By imposing its own social model, Galtung viewed the utilization of social imperialism as "a supreme exercise of power" that shaped not only the social and political structure of a subordinate country but the attitudes and behavior of its citizens as well. Galtung argued that the Soviet Union also played a role as a subimperialist center by facilitating the penetration of Eastern Europe by capitalist imperial forces from the West. Galtung's description of subimperialism in the Soviet Bloc emphasized the heavy reliance of Eastern European countries on Russian imports of materials, products, and technology. This dependence created both political leverage and favorable terms of trade for the Soviet Union and enabled them to exercise regional control as an imperialist center by *delegation* or *proxy* for Western capitalist expansion overall.

Empirically, Galtung's theory of structural imperialism was (and remains) difficult to test in its entirety because it involves numerous dimensions and relations of interaction at the local, national, and international level. Due to the readily accessible nature of

operational economic indicators such as those compiled by the World Bank, IMF, and the United Nations (e.g., GNP per/cap, GDP per/cap, trade composition, etc.), he subjected only the economic dimensions of imperialism to empirical testing (Galtung 1971).[2] In his method of defining center and peripheral relations, Galtung noted that the categorization of these collectivities based on the use of multiple indicators could lead to variable distinctions (i.e., center relative to one aspect but peripheral relative to another) and possible cases of divergence. Therefore, he introduced a trichotomous classification of nations to include the category of the *go-between* in addition to the center and the periphery, which he argued would accommodate more diverse patterns of interaction.

> More interesting results can be obtained by interspersing a third nation between the Centre and Periphery nations. Such a nation could, in fact, serve as a go-between. Concretely, it would exchange semi-processed goods with highly processed goods and semi-processed goods with raw materials downwards. It would simply by located in between Centre and Periphery where the degree of processing of its export products is concerned . . . In another version of the same conception the go-between nation would be one cycle behind the Centre as to technology but one cycle ahead to the Periphery; in line with its position as to degree of processing. (Galtung 1971, 128-29)

As concrete instances of the go-between nation, Galtung offered the following examples:

- *Mexico*, *Argentina*, and *Brazil* as go-betweens within the relational chain between the United States (center) and Central America (periphery).
- *South Korea* and *Taiwan* as go-betweens within the relational chain between Japan (center) and Southeast Asia (periphery).
- *Western Europe* as go-between within the relational chain between the United States (center) and Eastern Europe (periphery).

In the evolution of development theory, the structural theory of imperialism advanced by Johan Galtung represented a significant effort, I believe, to move beyond

"dependency" relations of inequality as bound solely by economic determinants.[3] His firm contention that the erosion of economic imperialism would fail to guarantee the erosion of other forms of imperialism and, moreover, that the demise of imperialism in general would fail to eradicate other forms of dominance relations represented an attempt to construct a complex web of global inequality that requires less confined solutions than those proposed by Prebisch and the ECLA (such as income redistribution). For world-systems analysis, Galtung's specification of the "go-between nation" as an integral part of center/periphery relations clearly sets the theoretical stage for Wallerstein's discussion of a semiperipheral region and a trichotomous structure of interstate relations.

## WORLD-SYSTEMS RESEARCH AND ELABORATION

*The Wallersteinian Conception.* The existence of a "go-between" region of the international division of labor, as structurally distinct from the center and periphery, was given a permanent place in the conception of *the modern world-system* by Immanuel Wallerstein. Following Galtung's notion of a "bridgehead" and Marini's conception of "subimperialism," he states that "(i)t was noted by historians of colonial rule that in the establishment and extension of colonies, an imperial power often made use of one local group to help it rule over the local peoples, a relational development that lent itself to the label, 'sub-imperialism'" (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1982, 47). This analogy suggests that Wallerstein follows these authors in viewing the potential of semiperipheral regions to be used by the core to further facilitate its dominance (both political and economic) over

peripheral regions. But, more specifically, Wallerstein emphasizes the stability of the semiperiphery as a *regional* center of power that houses within its borders both peripheral processes in relation to core states, and core-like processes in relation to peripheral states. Therefore, the semiperiphery is unique because it is based on a "double antinomy of class" (between rich and poor) and performs a dual function in the global division of labor (acting both core-like and peripheral). As a result, Wallerstein believes this region plays a crucial role in maintaining political stability in the world-system. Without a middle region the system would be far more polarized between upper and lower stratum and far less stable, he maintains, because the core would be faced with a much larger, potentially unified, oppositional mass of proletarians. Because the semiperiphery is both exploited and exploiter, it acts as a buffer to mitigate against extreme polarization and therefore potentially massive resistance against the core of the world-economy (Wallerstein 1976).

It is important to note that, for Wallerstein, the concept semiperiphery does not refer to a "relational economic process." For him, the semiperiphery is understood as containing *both* peripheral processes in relation to core states and core-like processes in relation to peripheral states.

> It [semiperipherality] is not an economic activity because this is a *dyadic* relationship of unequal exchange between a *pair* of objects that are exchanged in the division of labor . . . Semiperipheral seems to be almost by definition an adjective you apply to states as opposed to core and periphery. (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1982, 93; emphasis in the original)

In other words, all instances of unequal exchange between two states are understood *in general* as core/periphery relations even when that exchange takes place between

semiperipheral states and peripheral states or between semiperipheral states and core states.

Within the global political structure of the modern world-system (i.e., the interstate system), the semiperiphery also displays a unique tendency according to Wallerstein. Since the sixteenth century, the modern interstate system has promoted the development of the national-state as the primary unit of political legitimation. By taking control of a state's political apparatus, interest groups have an effective means of altering the international division of labor to their interests. Because the labor force in semiperipheral states consists of both core and peripheral components, the state apparatus is often a battle ground for different interest groups who wish to enact domestic policies that will act in their favor. It is for this main reason that states located in the semiperiphery are most often the place where the battle for state power is most acute. Indeed, it is not uncommon for various groups within semiperipheral states to attempt to strengthen the state apparatus in hopes of altering the organization of production processes within their borders and thus their overall position in the axial division of labor of the world-economy.

> Various groups located inside, outside, and across any given state's frontiers are constantly seeking to increase, maintain, or decrease the 'power' of the state . . . These groups are seeking to change [existing power relationships] because of some sense that such changes will improve the particular group's ability to profit, directly or indirectly, from the operations of the world market. The state is the most convenient institutional intermediary in the establishment of market constraints (quasi monopolies, in the broadest sense of the term) in favor of particular groups. (Wallerstein 1984, 30)

Ultimately, these attempts by various groups or states to appropriate a larger share of the benefits of the global division of labor do not go unnoticed in the core. In fact, the

reactionary "counter-pressures" applied by core powers are a continuing cause of military tension in the interstate system (Wallerstein 1984). The Persian Gulf War is a recent example of a core state (the United States) reacting with strong military force against a semiperipheral state (Iraq) that attempted to appropriate a larger share of a regional economic surplus (oil reserves in Kuwait). Consequently, the possibility of actual "upward mobility" of a semiperipheral state (to core status) is rare in Wallerstein's interpretation. When it does occur, it is more likely to succeed during periods of economic stagnation in the global economy. Global cycles of economic stagnation and growth are commonly measured by world-systems theorists in Kondratieff waves (K-waves) of long-term economic activity. These K-waves are characterized by periods of economic expansion (A-phases), and periods of economic downturn (B-phases) that, combined, comprise one cycle lasting roughly 40-60 years.

During moments of world economic downturn, Wallerstein maintains that semiperipheral states can expand their overall control of the world market.

> The reason for this is relatively straightforward. As long as the products of core producers are relatively 'scarce,' they can pick and choose among semiperipheral bidders for their investment in (semi-) manufactures and for their purchase of commodities. When the core producers face a situation of 'over-supply,' they begin to compete intensely with each other to maintain their share in a comparatively shrinking world market for their finished goods . . . At that time, semiperipheral countries can, up to a point, pick and choose among core producers not only in terms of the sale of their commodities . . . but also in terms both of welcoming their investment in manufactures and of purchasing their producer's goods. (Wallerstein 1979, 99)

This increased advantage, according to Wallerstein, may have a profound effect on the political policies of states, the degree of their "nationalism" and militance, and their pattern of international diplomatic alliances. The mobilization of state-directed

nationalism has frequently been recognized in world-systems theory as a strong prerequisite for increased capital accumulation and, ultimately, upward mobility within the capitalist world-economy; nationalism can act as "a social force to construct cultural integration and to discipline bureaucratic and social organizations" (Lubeck and Palmer 1989, 197).[4]

But even during the "windows of opportunity" that appear during B-phases, only a few states are able to take advantage of the downturn and improve their economic position and become part of the core. According to Wallerstein, the reason for this is endemic to "the state-level adaptation of the traditional 'dog eat dog' workings of capitalism" (Wallerstein 1979, 101). Within the capitalist world-economy, he argues, a semiperipheral country must not only rise at the expense of core states, but also at the expense of other semiperipheral states that are also competing to improve their position. Such a semiperipheral state must appropriate a disproportionate level of the "collective advantage" of the semiperiphery as a whole *to itself* in particular. This is defined by Wallerstein *not* as "development" (as Modernization theory might conclude) but rather as "successful expropriation of world surplus." If a current regime proves unsuccessful in effectuating positive change, political instability often results as contending interest groups stand ready to take over the state apparatus. Ultimately, any promotion of a semiperipheral state (to core status) is entirely individual and does not transform the nature of the axial division of labor in the world-economy because the advance of one state must be based on the decline of others which reinforces their unequal positioning (Wallerstein 1979, 1984).

*Upward Mobility and Oligarchic Wealth in the Semiperiphery: Giovanni Arrighi.* As Wallerstein points out, all states within the semiperiphery (or the entire world-system for that matter) cannot develop or "move up" the global hierarchy of wealth at the same time. To support this point, Giovanni Arrighi makes use of the concepts of "democratic" and "oligarchic" wealth first developed by Roy Harrod in the 1950s. "Democratic wealth," in principle, represents a command over resources that are available to everyone based on the "intensity" and "efficiency" of their efforts. "Oligarchic wealth," by contrast, does not reward the efforts of its recipients based on their intensity and efficiency and is never available to all no matter how intense and efficient their efforts are. By definition, the struggle to attain oligarchic wealth is inherently self-defeating and the idea that all can achieve it is an illusion (Arrighi 1990, 1991). As Wallerstein and Arrighi argue, the wealth of core states is comparable to Harrod's concept of oligarchic wealth because attempts to develop and attain economic rewards by peripheral and semiperipheral states face an "adding-up" problem. The opportunities for economic advancement do not constitute equal opportunities for advancement by all states because the achievements of one state are made at the expense of others. "It [core wealth] cannot be generalized because it is based on relational processes of exploitation and relational processes of exclusion that presuppose the continually reproduced poverty of the majority of the world population" (Arrighi 1990, 16).

Within the semiperiphery, Arrighi argues that struggles against *exclusion* by the core are akin to struggles for a relatively secure position in the world division of labor where core states attempt to exclude or "crowd out" peripheral and semiperipheral states from

the use and enjoyment of scarce resources. Semiperipheral success in this kind of struggle generally implies the following:

> (1) greater specialization in activities in which the semiperipheral state has or can acquire some kind of competitive advantage, (2) an active involvement in relations of unequal exchange in which the semiperipheral state supplies commodities embodying low-wage labor to core states in exchange for commodities embodying high-wage labor, and (3) a more thorough exclusion of peripheral states from the activities in which the semiperipheral state seeks greater specialization. (Arrighi 1990, 17)

Struggles against *exploitation* move in the opposite direction, according to Arrighi. These are struggles that attempt to create divisions of labor that are as autonomous as possible from the axial division of labor of the capitalist world-economy. In order to succeed in this kind of struggle, semiperipheral states generally attempt the following:

> (1) the undertaking by the semiperipheral state of a wide range of activities regardless of comparative advantage, (2) the self-exclusion of the semiperipheral state from relationships of unequal exchange with core states, and (3) an active involvement in relations of unequal exchange in which the semiperipheral state supplies commodities embodying high-wage labor to peripheral states in exchange for commodities embodying low-wage labor. (Arrighi 1990, 17)

Arrighi points out that success in these endeavors has inherent limitations. The very success of struggles against exclusion can lead to more intense exploitation by core states, which can then lead to the further exclusion of semiperipheral states from scarce resources and rewarding ventures. Likewise, the success of struggles against exploitation can lead to self-exclusion from the wealthiest markets of the world-economy and from access to the technological innovations that are associated with wealthier regions. Arrighi argues that the best that semiperipheral states can achieve is a safe distance from the poverty of peripheral states but, as a group, they can never bridge the gulf that separates their wealth from the oligarchic wealth of the core.

By conceptualizing the nature of the semiperiphery as displaying distinctly political and economic characteristics, Arrighi concentrates his analysis on the hierarchy of *wealth* in the world-*economy* and believes that GNP per capita is the most appropriate indicator for representing the fundamental dynamics of economic relationships among the tripartite division of states in the world-system. In his examination of the position of states in the world-economy between 1938 and 1983, Arrighi (1986, 1991) found periods of both upward mobility and downward mobility for individual states in the semiperiphery, but these pendulum-like movements do little to change the underlying hierarchy of wealth, which in fact has remained quite stable. In the latter half of the twentieth century, he states that the push for industrialization (or modernization in general) by peripheral and semiperipheral states has failed to deliver real economic growth such as that enjoyed in the core. The ability of a few states—Japan and Italy—to advance from semiperiphery to core has been the exception, not the rule. Arrighi describes the belief in industrial development as a general model of economic prosperity as "the developmentalist illusion."

*Labor Unrest in the Semiperiphery and Periphery: Findings of the WLG at the Fernand Braudel Center*. By examining groups of states rather than individual states, Arrighi argues that the hierarchy of wealth of the capitalist world-economy is as well established today as it was 50 years ago; the structural positions of core, periphery, and semiperiphery remain stable. But the fact that the industrialization of the semiperiphery has failed to alter the structure of the world-economy does not mean that nothing has changed,

according to Arrighi. He maintains that the efforts to industrialize in the semiperiphery has been part of a global process of the "proletarianization of the work force" (that has occurred in the periphery as well) where the peasantry has become a minority and rural workers have increasingly entered into the capitalist workforce.

For ten years the World Labor Research Working Group (WLG) at the Fernand Braudel Center explored the links between large-scale labor unrest and long-term social changes in the modern world-system during the twentieth century. Among the changes that were found to be salient factors in explaining labor unrest were world hegemony (periods when one nation dominated the world-system both politically and economically) and the proletarianization of the work force.

Two distinct patterns emerged when labor unrest was analyzed in comparison to cycles of world hegemony. These patterns roughly corresponded to the period of transition (also called the "rivalry period") from British to U.S. hegemony (1911-1950) and to the period of U.S. hegemony (1951-1990). During the rivalry period, labor unrest was far more explosive than labor unrest in the hegemony period. "In large part this divergent pattern is due to the role of world wars in first dampening, and then provoking simultaneous world scale outbreaks of social conflict. The absence of world wars in the hegemony period has made labor unrest less explosive" (Silver 1995, 171). In other words, involvement in war may increase national sentiments and social cohesion only at the onset of conflict. As wars drag on, the likelihood of social unrest and revolution increases, even after national conflicts have concluded.

During the 1950s and 1960s (the decades of strong U.S. hegemony) labor unrest

declined worldwide. "Cooptation through rising wages and benefits was a central mechanism of conflict containment in the core; while less expensive forms of cooptation . . . [were] obtained in the semiperiphery and periphery" (Silver 1995, 183). But as Western Europe and Japan caught up with the U.S. in the 1970s, these mechanisms of conflict-containment in the core ceased to function and were replaced in the core by geographical relocation, restructuring, and union-busting (Silver 1995). Indeed, the WLG argues that the current success of conflict-containment strategies in the core is based on its ability to "externalize" or "export" the contradictions of capitalism to the periphery and semiperiphery.

During the 1970s, the injection of foreign investment into the semiperiphery produced strong economic growth. But it also created new and militant working classes with significant disruptive power. The major response of foreign investors in the core to this reaction has been to further relocate production and capital to more peripheral sites. Arrighi believes that this "quantum leap" in the proletarianization of the world division of labor has created tensions and contradictions that will be concentrated in the semiperiphery but that also will greatly affect the politics of other more peripheral regions of the world-economy for generations to come.

> Widespread processes of proletarianization and industrialization have endowed the industrial proletariat of the semiperiphery with a social power comparable to that previously enjoyed only by the proletariat of the core but in a national context of relative deprivation long forgotten . . . in core states. (Arrighi 1990, 26)

*Semiperipheries as Inherently Transformative and Upwardly Mobile: C. Chase-Dunn.* Christopher Chase-Dunn argues that the semiperiphery is the "weak link" in the modern

world-system and provides the terrain upon which the most powerful and successful attempts at socialism will occur. The main reason for this, he states, is because the semiperiphery is more resistant to the "harmonizing" effects of core/periphery exploitation which tend to mute class conflict and weaken the stability of socialist structures in both peripheral and (primarily) core states. In addition, he views semiperipheral states as having the potential (more so than core or peripheral states) for upwardly mobile action because of the tendency for state-led development in this region.

According to Chase-Dunn, "harmonizing" effects in the core stem mainly from the ability to exploit the periphery. In general, this ability creates more profitable business opportunities for core capitalists and a climate of reduced competition in core states for economic advance. As a result, core capitalists, because they are less pressed by competitive forces, are more likely to grant core workers higher wages, better working conditions, and economic and political concessions (resulting from labor strike demands for example). Thus, national solidarity between capitalists and workers is easier to achieve because, he says, core capitalists are able to "co-opt" core labor into a national alliance.

> [T]he 'long experience' in which business unionism and social democracy have been the outcome of a series of struggles between radical workers and the labor aristocracy has created a residue of trade union practices, party structures, legal and governmental institutions, and ideological heritages which act as barriers to new socialist challenges. (Chase-Dunn 1990, 25)

In addition to these barriers, Chase-Dunn also believes that socialist movements are undermined in the core because workers are divided into lower, middle, and upper classes and lack the motivation for structural change because the "labor aristocracy" has

benefited from a "nonconfrontational relationship" with core capitalists.

In the periphery, Chase-Dunn views the implementation of "anti-imperial rhetoric" by peripheral politicians as an effective tool for uniting the interests of capitalists and temporarily reducing class conflict within this region. He describes the type of peripheral state where this is likely to take place as follows:

> Peripheries in which the state is substantially controlled by core powers or dependent on core-based transnational corporations experience heightened levels of competition among contending groups of peripheral capitalists, and exacerbated class conflicts, though these may be largely invisible most of the time because of externally-supported repression. These conditions explain the high levels of political instability and likelihood of authoritarian regimes, as well as the internal weakness of the peripheral states. When peripheral politicians who are willing to employ anti-imperial rhetoric come to state power, this reduces these domestic conflicts somewhat, depending on the degree of implementation of anti-imperialist policies. Peripheral states that implement radical anti-imperial policies reduce the level of domestic class conflicts, but they face the grave peril of intervention by an offended core power. (Chase-Dunn 1990, 8)

As a result of their exploited position in the world-economy, Chase-Dunn sees two main obstacles to transformative action in peripheral states: repression and poverty. When socialist movements take state power in the periphery, he states, core powers quickly take action to either overthrow them or force them to abandon their socialist programs. Furthermore, the periphery maintains a level of development too low to fend-off core intervention or to develop the productive forces necessary for the emergence and maintenance of socialism. "It is simply harder to share power and wealth when there is very little of either" (Chase-Dunn 1990, 26).

Chase-Dunn believes that the reproduction of core/periphery exploitation is a critical element in maintaining class alliances in the core and the periphery. An important factor that aids this reproduction, he states, is the operation of the interstate system and the

promotion of the nation-state as the main political entity in the modern world-system. This characteristic of interstate development, according to Chase-Dunn, confines class struggles *within* nation-states and fragments the international division of labor into these discrete political entities. As a result, struggles for economic advancement in the world-system are restricted to improving the position of the state vis-à-vis other states rather than improving, for example, the position of peripheral workers *en masse* vis-à-vis core capitalists. "Proletarian internationalism has not yet been an effective unifying force even between core workers of different states, let alone between core and peripheral workers" (Chase-Dunn 1990, 6). Ultimately, this creates a "contradiction," in his view, between the economic basis of class *formation* and the political basis of class *struggle* that reproduces the core/periphery division of labor and stabilizes the capitalist world-system.

While core exploitation of the periphery creates and supports class alliances in both regions, Chase-Dunn contends that the intermediate world-system position of the semiperiphery undermines class alliances and promotes strong challenges to capitalism. He contends that the intermediate position of the semiperiphery, which produces a mix of both core and peripheral activities, leads to opportunities for economic exchange that present "contradictory alternatives." "There are real simultaneous possibilities in some semiperipheral countries for either an alliance with core powers or a mobilization for autocentric development" (Chase-Dunn 1990, 6). As a result, class alliances are more difficult to achieve (i.e., they are less harmonious) in the semiperiphery because different types of capitalists tend to have widely opposing interests. "Some have alliances with core powers based on their control of peripheral activities, while others favor more

independent policies which would expand core-type activities" (Chase-Dunn 1990, 5). Therefore, because of the potential for exacerbated class conflicts stemming from an intermediate position in the world-system, Chase-Dunn asserts that semiperipheral countries experience more militant class-based socialist revolutions and movements. Unlike peripheral states, semiperipheral ones generally have sufficient resources to protect socialist structures and to "stave off" core attempts at subversion, especially those that command a large territory (e.g., U.S.S.R. and China).

In semiperipheral countries with the potential for upward mobility, Chase-Dunn believes that *less* internal stratification and *more* politically liberal policies (promoting rapid changes) are required to achieve the degree of class harmony needed for ascent in the world-system. In addition, he points out (as do others such as Wallerstein) that state-centered mobilization is an important component of successful and efficient development. Depending on the direction of internal state policies (either toward core alliance or autarky), upwardly mobile semiperipheral countries likely display either rightist or leftist regimes.

> Those upwardly mobile countries that rely on alliances with core powers tend to develop rightist military regimes (e.g., Brazil from 1964 to recently), while those that attempt more self-reliant development move toward the left (e.g., China and the U.S.S.R.). Whether leftist or rightist, upwardly mobile semiperipheral countries tend to employ more state-directed and state-mobilized development policies than do core countries. (Chase-Dunn 1990, 5)

Ultimately, in order to understand the effects of world-system dynamics on semiperipheral action one must distinguish, according to Chase-Dunn, between transformative action that challenges capitalist development and upwardly mobile action that helps to promote it. Instances of upward mobility, according to Chase-Dunn, do not

challenge the capitalist mode of production but rather the existing set of power relations within it.

> [A] certain amount of upward mobility is normal in the process of reproducing the structures and logic of the capitalist world-economy. Most of the nation-states which have been successful at upward mobility have become the most powerful agents supporting and extending the logic of capitalism. (Chase-Dunn 1990, 4)

*The Semiperiphery as "Weak Link" in World-System Evolution: Chase-Dunn and Hall.* The recent work of Chase-Dunn and Hall (1991, 1993, 1994, 1997) is a significant attempt to expand and redefine the concepts and assumptions of world-systems theory. In doing so, they move beyond the study of the "rise of Western capitalism" in the sixteenth century to account for and explain the long-term, large-scale social changes of the last 12,000 years of human history.[5] In addition, their theory of world-systems evolution expands the role of the semiperiphery as central to the transformation and reproduction of world-system structures and processes. They contend that in order to understand fully the changes and future directions of the modern world-system one must examine the characteristics and transformations of earlier world-systems.

> We portray social change as a series of iterations as world-systems grow from very small to global. In order to eventually understand the particularities of world-systems we must first build a framework for comparison that abstracts from the particular. We need to abstract from space and time, to suspend considerations of scale and location, and to think analytically about the simplest structural features of world-systems . . . We envision a sequence of changes in which thousands of very small-scale world-systems merged into larger systems, which eventually merged to become the global modern world-system. (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997, 4-5)

This redirection of focus toward the examination of *multiple* world-systems is clearly a modification of Wallerstein's original conceptualization that explicated only two world-

systems—world-empires and the modern capitalist world-economy. As mentioned in the first chapter, Wallerstein took into account primarily large-scale intersocietal networks based either on politico-military domination or economic exploitation. And Wallerstein's concept of a world-system presupposed the unification of multiple cultures/nationalities in the exchange of "necessities," which thereby excluded any ancient or prehistorical intersocietal networks based on the exchange of "preciosities" between separate and distinct cultures.[6]

As Chase-Dunn and Hall point out, "archaeological and ethnographic evidence shows that most peoples who live in stateless and classless societies are engaged in important cross-cultural interactions (including the exchange of basic foodstuffs) that affect their cultural reproduction and historical development" (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997, 28). Therefore, as a significant point of departure, Chase-Dunn and Hall contend that small stateless and classless systems can also be meaningfully studied using world-systems concepts. By including earlier intersocietal networks into the scope of theoretical consideration (such as chiefdoms and city-states) Chase-Dunn and Hall proceed to rework several world-systems concepts so that they can be usefully applied to even the earliest social structures. Likewise, the addition of comparatively small, non-state social units such as "bands" or "tribes" required them to develop much broader terms than exist to describe the modern capitalist world-system. By taking into account these small-scale interaction networks, Chase-Dunn and Hall question the use of the term "world" in world-systems.

> We conceive of a world-system as an interactional entity that is self-contained in the sense that the important social processes that reproduce or transform social structures

> are within that interactional entity . . . We use the term 'world-system' to refer to the whole social context in which people live and the material networks important to their daily lives. (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997, 4, 28)

Thus, for their purposes Chase-Dunn and Hall define *world-systems* as "intersocietal networks in which the interactions (e.g. trade, warfare, intermarriage, information) are important for the reproduction of the internal structures of the composite units and importantly affect changes that occur in these local structures" (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997, 28). This abstract definition allows them to expand their empirical universe for comparison to include small, medium, and large world-systems from the prehistoric, ancient, classical, medieval, and modern time periods during the last 12,000 years.

In order to appreciate how Chase-Dunn and Hall have modified the world-system perspective in their conception of long term, large scale social changes, it is important to understand Wallerstein's interpretation of similar processes. Following Marx, Wallerstein identified the central, unifying force in the modern world-system as capitalism; a global division of labor that unites multiple cultures and societies based on the production and exchange of commodities on a price setting market for the purpose of profit and capital accumulation. For him, capitalism constitutes the underlying logic of the system that accounts for the general dynamics of the system as a whole. He argues that this *systemic logic* (what he calls the capitalist *mode of production*, a term borrowed from Marx) is a major "watershed" in human organization that first emerged around the sixteenth century in Europe. According to Wallerstein this capitalist mode will eventually be followed by another transition in system-wide processes sometime in the future—the transition to global socialism. Indeed, not all social scientists have emphasized economic processes as

central to system-wide change. There exists a vast literature from authors (such as David Wilkinson, Randall Collins, Michael Mann, and others) who stress the importance of "power politics" and the central role of the state in explaining large scale social change. In addition, not all social scientists share Wallerstein's view of historical change as having undergone major transitions in systemic logic but rather emphasize the continuity of underlying structural processes throughout history.[7]

By referring to modes of *accumulation*, Chase-Dunn and Hall continue Marx's and Wallerstein's emphasis on the historical transformation of system logics, but expand the scope of analysis to include a broader range of intersocietal processes.

> In order to clarify the terms in this debate, we define mode of accumulation as *the deep structural logic of production, distribution, exchange, and accumulation.* We prefer it to 'mode of production' because we do not want to restrict our focus solely to the analysis of production. Rather, we want to focus on the institutional mechanisms by which labor is mobilized and social reproduction is accomplished . . . We see the coherence of modes of *production*, relations of *production*, and forces of *production* as a typical consequence of the integration of local and intersocietal interaction processes within the dominant mode of *accumulation*. (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997, 29, 32; emphasis in the original)

They also identify a basic typology of modes of accumulation that they believe represent major "watersheds" in system logic transformations during the past 12,000 years: kin-based modes, tributary modes, capitalist modes, and the potential existence of future socialist modes. Chase-Dunn and Hall point out that these heuristic categories represent "predominant" modes that, when examined closely, are often mixed or transitional forms of organization. In other words, it is possible to have different modes of accumulation present within the same system. These modes may coexist at different levels of social organization but over time one mode tends to define the society or world-system as a

whole.

Chase-Dunn and Hall's theory of world-systems evolution combines a notion of fundamental change in modes of accumulation with a basic model that accounts for the major constraints and impetuses (both demographic and economic) of large scale historical change. This model highlights the interaction of eight variables (population growth, environmental degradation, population pressure, emigration, circumscription, conflict, hierarchy formation, and intensification) that represent the general causal properties involved in each local, regional, and global system over the past 12,000 years. Over time, this model goes through *iterations* as world-systems expand and as *transformations* in modes of accumulation occur. Ultimately, this evolutionary process of iterations and transformations accounts for the phenomenon of global expansion and coalescence as polities become larger and more hierarchical, production techniques become more and more "energy-utilizing," and population density increases (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997, ch. 6).

Interestingly, Chase-Dunn and Hall argue that the driving forces behind the transformation of modes of accumulation occur disproportionately in semiperipheral regions of world-systems.

> Generally stated, our contention is that *semiperipheral areas are likely to generate new institutional forms that transform system structures and modes of accumulation.* These changes often lead to the upward mobility of these same semiperipheral actors in the core/periphery hierarchy. (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997, 79; emphasis in the original)

In historical perspective, they see the semiperiphery as the "weak link" in the chain of historical continuity with the greatest potential for institutional change and innovation

and, therefore, a catalyst for transformational action. For example, Western Europe was seen as a semiperipheral region of the larger Afroeurasian world-system (ca. 1100) which had several core regions in the Near East, India, and China. According to Chase-Dunn and Hall (1997), Europe was first a peripheral region following the decline of the Roman Empire (ca. 500) before it was a semiperiphery of the Near Eastern core. Then it began to form its own internal core region (ca. 1650) to the north and west of the Mediterranean and to dominate its own periphery in eastern Europe and then the Americas. Finally, it came to dominate the older cores of the Near East, India, and China by the nineteenth century and consolidated its dominant position in the modern, capitalist world-system.

The main theories behind this claim are borrowed from several prominent social, economic, and historical thinkers whom they discuss in their work: Leon Trotsky, Alexander Gershenkron, Elman Service, and Carroll Quigley. What these theories have in common is a general understanding that relatively "less developed" societies of a regional or global system are often in a unique and advantageous position to overtake declining or aging core regions, advance their position in structural hierarchies of power, and/or transform the current structure of the system to their advantage.

> Many semiperipheral regions have played important roles in large-scale social change. We hypothesize that this is because of the organizational opportunities available to groups who are 'in the middle' of core/periphery hierarchies. Semiperipheral regions, we argue, are unusually fertile zones for social innovation because they can combine peripheral and core elements in new ways, and they are less constrained by core domination than are peripheral areas, and less committed than older core regions to the institutional baggage that comes with core status. (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997, 51)

To test this hypothesis, the authors argue that further investigation and comparison among different world-systems is needed to determine the different roles that semiperipheries

play over time. Indeed, they acknowledge the possibility that core/periphery hierarchies may exist that do not even contain intermediate/semiperipheral regions. For this main reason, Chase-Dunn and Hall present a "working" definition of the semiperiphery based on their preliminary findings, which they expect will be filled-in as research continues in this area. This working definition includes the following (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997, 37):

- A semiperipheral region may be one that mixes both core and peripheral forms of organization.
- A semiperipheral region may be spatially located between core and peripheral regions.
- A semiperipheral region may be spatially located between two or more competing core regions.
- Mediating activities between core and peripheral areas may be carried out in semiperipheral regions.
- A semiperipheral area may be one in which institutional features are in some ways intermediate between those forms found in core and periphery.

Clearly, the evolution of world-systems elaborated by Chase-Dunn and Hall challenges theorists from this perspective to expand their scope of theoretical and empirical consideration and to re-think their concepts and hypotheses in light of the expanding body of knowledge about historical evidence and events. The historical significance that they attribute to the semiperiphery as a continual locus of new institutional forms and transformational innovations is an example of their effort to extend world-system concepts in new directions. But, although they affirm the

importance of state-less/class-less societies and ecological constraints and demographic forces in their conceptualization, Chase-Dunn and Hall continue to use the world-system as the fundamental unit of analysis and employ basic concepts developed by Wallerstein such as world-economy, interstate system, and core/periphery hierarchy. In addition, they belong to a tradition in world-systems theory that focuses on material networks of exchange and on large-scale social structures that mobilize labor and accumulate surplus. Nevertheless, future efforts to investigate semiperipheral areas and to test their transformational capability will challenge social scientists to transcend the traditional boundaries of social science and combine advances in anthropology, archaeology, history, and political science in addition to sociology.

## SYNTHESIS AND INTEGRATION: FORMULATING A GENERAL TYPOLOGY

In the last two chapters, I have summarized the evolution of the concept "semiperiphery" by tracing its roots in twentieth century development thought and by presenting an overview of the main theories that have emerged in the dependency and world-systems' literature to arrive at a more thorough understanding of its use. Clearly the semiperiphery has consistently referred to an "intermediate" level of regional development in predominantly large-scale interaction networks that exhibit some degree of uneven growth. It was originally offered as a preliminary elaboration of the dyadic relational composition inherent in development theory. This intermediary role, which was conceived in the notion of "subimperialism" by Marini and "go-between nations" by

Galtung, helped account for the growing complexity of the burgeoning world-economy in the post-colonial, post-World War II era that produced various cases (such as Brazil) that were not easily explained by the center/periphery model of dependency theory.

Subsequent theoretical and empirical work by world-systems theorists such as Wallerstein, Arrighi, and Chase-Dunn have established the semiperiphery as a structural feature of the modern world-system, which has a distinctive class structure and an ability to mobilize both politically and socially during historical "windows of opportunity." In addition, the semiperiphery has come to be understood as a potentially explosive and transformative constituent of the modern world-system (as the WLG has shown in their global analysis of labor unrest) and in earlier large-scale intersocietal networks that date back hundreds, if not thousands, of years (as Chase-Dunn and Hall have outlined in their elaboration of the evolution of world-systems). Therefore, the concept of the semiperiphery has become increasingly useful in interpreting modern examples of rapid economic growth (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong), political democratization (Argentina, Brazil, Spain, Portugal), control over key natural resources (Venezuela, Mexico, Saudi Arabia), and regionally explosive racial and ethnic conflicts (South Africa, Israel, Iran) during the last several decades (Gereffi and Korzeniewicz 1989, 47). Historically, it has also been analyzed as a catalyst in the rise and fall of hegemonic core powers, city-states, and chiefdoms. Indeed, the presentation of "intermediate" regions as a locus for social revolutions (Boswell 1985), state-centered development and mobilization of national solidarity (Wallerstein 1984; Lubeck and Palmer 1989), antisystemic movements (Arrighi, Hopkins, and Wallerstein 1989; Chase-Dunn 1990),

labor unrest (Silver et al. 1995; Arrighi 1990), and transformative social innovation (Chase-Dunn 1988, 1990; Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997) places the role of the semiperiphery front and center in conceptualizations of large-scale social change and the evolution of societal organization.

As many authors have pointed out, the concept of the semiperiphery has been simultaneously one of the most innovative concepts in world-systems theory and one of its least explicated. Much of the problem, as Wallerstein has pointed out, is that the term semiperiphery does not refer to a distinctly relational process to the same degree that core and periphery do when speaking of structural relationships of power such as unequal economic exchange. If core-like activities generally garner a larger share of an economic exchange between two nation-states, for example, and peripheral activities garner a lesser share, then how much do semiperipheral activities obtain? This is sometimes more difficult to ascertain because one must locate and define a predominance of activities carried out between *both* ends of the structural, core/periphery spectrum. Therefore, as Wallerstein has stated, the term semiperiphery functions more like an adjective that describes the individual economic activities and political structure of a particular state rather than a relational economic process.

By definition semiperipheral activities comprise both core-like relations with the periphery and peripheral relations with the core. In this sense, the semiperiphery is not as easy to define because it contains more of an even mix of core-like and peripheral activities and thus does not lend itself as easily to the typical inverse relationship of core versus periphery. To be semiperipheral is to be neither the opposite of peripheral nor the

opposite of core-like but somewhere in between *two* extremes, whereas the notion of core is always defined in direct contrast to only one: the periphery. In addition, if one distinguishes between the two distinctive mechanisms operating in the modern world-system (an axial division of labor and the interstate system), a semiperipheral nation-state can be even more difficult to define because it can compensate for a lack of relative standing in one dimension by having strength in another. For example, Ireland has a relatively independent economy but is rather dependent politically on the core powers (especially Britain). Likewise, China maintains a rather independent standing politically and militarily, but struggles economically to distance itself from an overall standard of living characteristic of the periphery (Boswell 1985). Examples such as these further complicate the notion of the semiperiphery as an *even* mix of political and economic activities because they can act more peripheral in one dimension but more core-like in the other. For this reason, it has not been uncommon to treat the concept of the semiperiphery as a residual category or a convenient "dumping ground" for contemporary nation-states that are neither distinctly core-like nor peripheral. Nonetheless, it is these very contradictions that make the semiperiphery a unique region and give it its somewhat inexact definitional character.

Many world-systems theorists have argued that it is more productive to utilize the concepts of core, periphery, and semiperiphery as heuristic devices rather than fixed categories with rigid boundaries. Indeed, the modern world-system is replete with examples of nation-states that contain a combination of core, peripheral, or semiperipheral regions within their boundaries. For example, Appalachia functions more

like a semiperipheral region in the eastern section of the United States even though it is located in a hegemonic core country; Hong Kong functions more as a core-like region economically even though its mother country, China, does not; The central desert region of Australia, which surrounds the largest aboriginal reserve in this core country, clearly functions more as a peripheral region.

Categories in general, including those applied in the world-systems literature, should not be reified to the extent that all comparable elements under consideration are indispensably bound to one or another—borderline cases will inevitably arise that share characteristics of more than one category. With this in mind, it should be clear that when we speak of the terms core, periphery, and semiperiphery we are referring to heuristic categories with *permeable* boundaries that serve as reference points to guide the researcher in organizing and making sense of common characteristics both general and specific. I also tend to agree with those theorists who conceptualize each category as located along a continuum of activities (both economic and political) ranging from absolute core-like to absolute peripheral. In this sense, the term semiperiphery is envisaged less as a strong *locus* of world-system relations and more as a blurred *zone* on a quantitative core-periphery continuum. Contemporary semiperipheral nation-states would therefore exist somewhere around the midpoint of this continuum based on their relative degree of economic and/or politico-military strength.

Nonetheless, even if the category "semiperiphery" (as well as core and periphery) is to be understood as having relatively permeable boundaries, it should be reasonable to assume that if a nation-state, region or collectivity is found to have a preponderance of

activities and/or characteristics that have been established as *semiperipheral* (used as an adjective like peripheral and core-like) then one can refer to that nation-state, region or collectivity as being a member of the *semiperiphery* (or periphery or core). Likewise, if and only if a nation-state, region or collectivity displays a multitude of semiperipheral characteristics and/or activities, can we speak of that social unit as being a member of the semiperiphery since that unit can potentially exhibit characteristics common to all three categories. This, of course, begs the question of whether there are characteristics and/or activities that are widely agreed upon as being specifically semiperipheral. Indeed, when a region, nation-state or collectivity is referred to as being a member of the semiperiphery, what in general does that indicate? Clearly, it depends on the specific circumstances (including both time and space) under which the case is being examined. Based, however, on what has been reviewed thus far, it should be possible to explicate several broad characteristics that have been used most frequently when referring to members of the semiperiphery, which in turn can be used as a reference in understanding the make-up and direction of cases in that category. Since the authors and accounts presented in chapters one and two concern primarily "the modern era," the following typology will refer mainly to the modern capitalist world-system and will not attempt to replicate the typology presented by Chase-Dunn and Hall. I will refer to the general classifications presented below as *realms of semiperipherality*, which represent four predominant dimensions (economic, politico-military, geo-political, socio-cultural) of the semiperiphery of the modern world-system. It would be difficult to generalize all of the following characteristics to the region as a whole since different semiperipheral areas will

have different combinations. Therefore, I believe that this typology is best utilized on a case-by-case basis to identify single social units rather than as bounding criteria to delineate entire regions.

*Realms of Semiperipherality in the Modern World-System*:

- *Economic*: (1) semiperipheral areas may exhibit an approximately even number of *both* core-like and peripheral economic segments or pockets in its population that exist as separate; (2) semiperipheral areas may exhibit an approximately *even or intermediate mix* of core-like and peripheral economic activities throughout its population; (3) semiperipheral areas may experience a higher degree of rapid growth and/or upward mobility in core/periphery hierarchies over time, especially during periods of global economic downturn; (4) semiperipheral areas may display a disproportionately higher degree of economic strength to compensate for a low degree of political strength; (5) semiperipheral areas may carry out both core-like economic exchange with peripheral areas and peripheral economic exchange with core areas at approximately even levels; (6) semiperipheral areas may exhibit a heightened degree of state-centered economic development to better their intermediate position in global or regional hierarchies; and (7) semiperipheral areas may mediate economic exchange between core and periphery by transferring the flow of imports and exports between the two.
- *Politico-Military*: (1) semiperipheral areas may exhibit a higher degree of political instability over time, especially during periods of global economic downturn and core rivalry; and (2) semiperipheral areas may display a disproportionately higher degree of

politico-military strength to compensate for a low degree of economic strength.

- *Geo-Political*: (1) semiperipheral areas may act as regional centers of power (subimperialist) to maintain or expand core influence and/or exhibit a "quasi-monopoly" over weaker areas in a specific region; (2) semiperipheral areas may be spatially located in-between core and peripheral regions; (3) semiperipheral areas may be spatially located in-between two competing core regions; and (4) semiperipheral areas may mediate diplomatic and military flows between core and periphery or between two core competing areas when acting as a regional buffer between the two.
- *Socio-Cultural*: (1) semiperipheral areas may exhibit more state-centered efforts to mobilize nationalism and cultural integration over time, especially during periods of global economic downturn and core rivalry; (2) semiperipheral areas may exhibit higher levels of social conflict, especially during periods of global economic downturn and core rivalry; (3) semiperipheral areas may exhibit higher levels of labor unrest, especially during *initial* periods of core-wide economic expansion; and (4) semiperipheral areas may display a higher number of anti-systemic movements that challenge the logic of capitalism in the modern world-system.

NOTES

[1] Galtung's model, as presented in two articles from the 1970s, is complex and involves the explication of numerous concepts whose full discussion is outside the scope of this thesis. The summary that follows covers his basic conception of imperialism and a brief discussion of his operational methods for establishing the empirical existence of structural imperialism that also introduces the notion of an intermediate region he refers to as the "go-between."

[2] Indeed, this is a frequent compromise in world-system theory as well. Many efforts to operationalize core-periphery dynamics (Arrighi and Drangel 1986; Grimes 1996; Nemeth and Smith 1985; Smith and White 1992; Snyder and Kick 1979) involve strictly economic relations.

[3] Ironically, the evidence garnered in support of his theoretical model (Galtung, 1971) concerns only that form of structural imperialism for which data is most readily available—namely economic imperialism. This empirical shortcoming as well as his theoretical inclusion of dependency concepts (such as center and periphery) probably accounts for his reference as a dependency theorist even though he has been associated with peace research for much of his career. Nonetheless, the multidimensional scope of Galtung's theoretical approach should be viewed as an attempt at a more holistic interpretation of structural inequality.

[4] Wallerstein (1976) provides a lengthy analysis of the effects of the world economic downturn on domestic class strategy and alliances for increased economic advantage within semiperipheral states.

[5] The acclimatization of world-systems theory by Chase-Dunn and Hall is by no means the first and only attempt to modify Wallerstein's conceptual scheme to prehistorical analysis. However, their theoretical framework is unique in that it specifies the crucial role of the semiperiphery in the historical transformation of world-systems and is therefore directly appropriate to the focus of this thesis. Chase-Dunn and Hall (1997) provides a concise overview of contending theories of long-term, large-scale historical change that are not covered in this section.

[6] In general, *necessities* are understood here as items exchanged that are needed for basic subsistence such as foodstuffs, clothing, tools, raw materials, etc. *Preciosities*, on the other hand, are items exchanged that are imbued with or embody symbolic significance, prestige, wealth, status, etc.

[7] Chase-Dunn and Hall delineate two distinct camps regarding fundamental processes of long-term historical change and the nature of system logics based on either the belief in inherent change or general permanence. They refer to the "logical continuationists" as arguing that historical world-systems have all had roughly the same system logic and the "qualitative transformationists" as arguing that system logics undergo fundamental transformations over time. As the authors point out, these debates are not new and have manifested themselves in other disciplines by different names such as "substantivists" versus "formalists" and "primitivists" versus "modernists."

# 3

# TESTING THE UPWARD MOBILITY HYPOTHESIS

The endeavor to refine the conceptual understanding of the semiperiphery would greatly benefit from the ability to empirically establish the salience of each characteristic listed under the four realms from chapter two. Indeed, some of them have been touched upon in varying degrees (mainly through individual case studies) and many have yet to be explored beyond the theoretical level. As explained in the previous chapter, one abiding theme that permeates the world-system literature on the semiperiphery is the inherent propensity of constituent members of this region for upward mobility. Surprisingly, this assumption has been scarcely broached as a primary topic of investigation in light of the recent changes in the international landscape. Although a few notable studies have been put forth by Christopher Chase-Dunn (1988, 1990) and C.P. Terlouw (1992, 1993), further empirical research is needed to assess the validity of this hypothesis and improve social scientific understanding of interstate relations. In order to test the mobility of semiperipheral states, however, one must first locate this region in time and space based on relevant operational criteria. This involves mediating an ongoing debate in the literature regarding which operational criteria are most representative of structural position in the world-system.

Therefore, this section seeks to offer an improved test of the mobility hypothesis that examines previous operational techniques and proposes four ways to improve upon them: (1) using multiple measures of world-system position (WSP) to avoid economic determinism; (2) the examination of multiple years to observe the long term process of upward mobility; (3) measurement of WSP at minimum intervals (approximately five years); and (4) the conceptualization of WSP as a continuous variable. I will proceed in this endeavor by first reviewing the major empirical efforts to operationalize WSP and test upward mobility. Next, I will propose an alternative methodology for testing the mobility hypothesis and subject it to an empirical test based on available data.

## EMPIRICAL STUDIES OF SEMIPERIPHERAL MOBILITY

Only two empirical studies of semiperipheral mobility have been advanced in the world-systems literature. Chase-Dunn believes that in considering the question of upward mobility one needs to distinguish between position in the world-system and changes in that position. "In the modern world-system this is accomplished by examining relative indicators comparatively at one point in time (indicators of position in the core/periphery hierarchy), and rates of change over time in those indicators relative to the population of competing actors" (Chase-Dunn 1990, 19). Specifically, he posits a curvilinear relationship between structural position in the world-system (core, periphery or semiperiphery) and mobility (movement up or down these three zones of the world-system) where the semiperiphery experiences a higher degree of mobility and the core and

periphery a lesser degree. In testing his hypothesis, Chase-Dunn used the measure of gross domestic product per capita (logged to correct for skewness) in 1970 of 75 countries as an indicator of WSP and growth rates in terms of GDP per capita from 1970 to 1981 as an indicator of mobility. Adhering to the notion of WSP as a continuous variable, the expected result was an inverted U-shaped relationship between GDP per capita and the growth rates of GDP per capita where the distribution peaks in the middle of the curve and falls at the extremes. Ultimately, no significant relationship between WSP and upward mobility was found.

As stated above, C.P. Terlouw's (1992, 1993) main empirical work has centered on establishing an appropriate measure of WSP but he also has used this data to test the assumption of semiperipheral mobility. Similar in his method to Chase-Dunn, he used his index of z-scores described above as a measure of WSP. As a measure of mobility, growth rates were calculated for 108 states from 1960 to 1985. The various growth rates were then added together to derive one average score for each state over the twenty-five year period. Terlouw then divided the total number of states in the analysis into five categorizations by their WSP in 1985 and compared those categories to their aggregate growth rates. The results were as follows: 25 most peripheral states = average growth rate of -.19; next 26-50 states = average growth rate of -.01; next 51-75 states = average growth rate of .22; next 76-100 states = average growth rate of .03; 8 most corelike states = average growth rate of -.13. Terlouw concluded from this comparison that the average changes in WSP are the lowest in the groups with the lowest and the highest scores for WSP in 1985 (i.e., the core and the periphery). The middle group (51-75), which had the

biggest growth in WSP, is used to corroborate the hypothesis that semiperipheral states experience the greatest mobility.

## OPERATIONALIZING WORLD-SYSTEM POSITION

Since the early 1980s, Giovanni Arrighi has recognized the controversy regarding how precisely to identify the position of particular states in the world-system and the lack of general agreement over which operational criteria to use in classifying them. Much of the debate over this question stems from the confusion regarding the position of a state in relation to the world division of labor (i.e., its economic strength) and its position in the interstate system (i.e., its politico-military strength) (Arrighi and Drangel 1986).

In addition, there has also been growing criticism against the statistical procedure of demarcating three distinct and separate zones, what Grimes (1996) calls the "ordinalization" of WSP. Those who are critical of this technique argue that it is more productive to utilize the concepts of core, periphery, and semiperiphery as heuristic devices rather than fixed categories with rigid boundaries. Recent studies (Chase-Dunn 1989; Grimes 1996; Terlouw 1992, 1993) have begun to conceptualize each category as located along a continuum of power/control ranging from absolute core-like to absolute peripheral. In this sense, the semiperiphery is envisaged less as a *discrete* entity (separate from the core and the periphery) but more as a *blurred* zone on a quantitative core-periphery continuum.

One of the most notable attempts to operationalize WSP is Arrighi and Drangel's (1986) analysis of the changes in global distributions of GNP per capita from 1938-1983 for 105 states. Their interpretation of the "real" meaning of GNP as a sole indicator of WSP is insightful but, nevertheless, has generated considerable debate. In regard to the semiperiphery, they argue that because these states enclose within their boundaries a more or less even mix of core-peripheral activities, indigenous residents, therefore, must command a more or less average share of the total surplus produced in the world-economy. This command, they believe, must be reflected in "intermediate per capita incomes." Arrighi and Drangel's effort remains influential for its theoretical sophistication, long time frame, and large sample size. Nevertheless, it remains controversial for two main reasons. One, utilizing GNP per capita by itself is a poor measure of WSP because it only measures economic control and can overestimate the strength of social democratic states (i.e., Switzerland, Sweden) and oil rich states (i.e., Kuwait, Libya). Two, the collapsing of a continuous measure (i.e., GNP) into ordinal categories leads to a certain degree of arbitrariness regarding where exactly to place the statistical cutting points.

Grimes' (1996) study of economic cycles and international mobility in the world-system also boasts a large sample size (105 countries) and a long time frame (1790-1990). His measure of WSP creates a ratio-level index by converting the scores of each country (based on four economic measures) into z-scores and adding them together. Taken together, the z-scores comprise a continuum of relational position in the world-system. The four measures he utilizes are as follows: 1) percentage of global product consumed

by each country (GDP/global GDP); 2) overall productivity of each country (GDP per capita); 3) trade dependence of each country (ratio of exports/GDP); 4) relative economic size of each country with respect to its trading partners.[1] Comparatively, Grimes provides a much more thorough measure of economic control than Arrighi and Drangel and does not collapse the zones of core-periphery-semiperiphery into ordinal categories. But he also excludes any indicators of military and/or political control. Furthermore, although he uses 105 countries overall from 1790-1990, only 38 have data prior to World War II. In 1870, 1830, and 1790 only twenty, six, and two states have data respectively.

C.P. Terlouw (1992, 1993) has also created a ratio-level index of WSP based on the z-scores of six indicators: percentage in world trade from 1978-1983; stability of trade relations from 1961-1983; GDP per capita as percentage in total world GDP per capita; military power in 1985; number of foreign embassies sent and received in 1985; number of foreign diplomats sent and received in 1985. Terlouw's effort is an important contribution to this literature because he measures three dimensions of power/control in the world-system (economic, political, and military) and two variants of each of those dimensions (economic = production and trade; political = diplomats and diplomatic missions; military = armed forces and expenditure). Unfortunately, by increasing the number of indicators, data availability clearly constrained the consistency and the number of years that were included in the analysis and made it harder to establish clear trends over time.

In contrast to the three studies mentioned above that emphasize the *attributes* of states, another approach to the empirical study of WSP has been the use of *network* measures.

> This technology, first developed for application to studies of the social power an individual has within a community, uses information about the frequency and type of linkages between the country under investigation and other members of its 'community' (here, the entire World-System). More precisely, it uses measures of inter-country interaction (like trade) to locate and quantify the position of a country within an international network as compared to other countries within that network. Usually these measures combine several different kinds of interaction networks that are claimed to be important dimensions of WSP, for example trade volume of the target country with its main trading partners, or the exchange of diplomats. It is argued by those pursuing this approach . . . that these network measures are superior to attribute measures (like GDP) because the core/periphery position of countries is *relational*, that it is exclusively meaningful relative to other countries. (Grimes 1996, 53; emphasis in the original)

The common procedure in this approach has been to present a blockmodel based on the comparison of states in various international network measures. Although they tend to employ a great deal of empirical sophistication, the complexity involved in comparing the relations between many cases based on many indicators constrains the researcher to a very limited time frame. Furthermore, the process of associating block classifications to specific WSP is subjective.

For example, Snyder and Kick (1979) found ten blocks based on the relation of 118 states in four types of international networks in 1965: trade flows, military interventions, diplomatic exchanges, and conjoint treaty memberships. Similarly, Nemeth and Smith (1985) found eight blocks based on the trade patterns of 86 states in 53 international commodity trade networks in 1970. The main problems for both of these studies are: 1) the derivation of WSP is based on data for only one year and; 2) the process of

corroborating the three-tiered structure of the world-system from multiple block classifications is inherently biased.

## OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

There are four main problems associated with the aforementioned studies of mobility and WSP that need to be addressed if a better method is to be employed. First, as alluded to above in the discussion of operationalizing WSP, it is highly questionable that the variable of WSP can be fully represented by the use of GDP/GNP per capita alone. Rarely can the complexities of a social phenomenon be adequately explained through the agency of only one proposed cause; statistically one predictor variable rarely yields a high proportion of explained variation in the outcome variable. Grimes presents a very thorough measure of WSP but only along the dimension of economics. Snyder and Kick (1979) utilize multiple measures in their study but the intensity of data required for network measures severely limits the time frame that can be analyzed. Ultimately, Terlouw's multiple attribute measure appears more convincing because it measures the most dimensions of power/control in the world-system.

Second, when discussing dynamics of the world-system such as mobility one must keep in mind that these are long-term changes that take shape over many years, decades or even centuries. Indeed, Chase-Dunn leaves himself a narrow range for generalization by examining a time period of only ten years. Terlouw's examination of 25 years is more conducive to establishing world-system trends but, as shown above, the data for his six

indicators of position is spotty and does not actually cover the entire period of 1960 to 1985. Unfortunately, there seems to be an inherent trade-off (i.e., an inverse relationship) between the number of indicators used to measure WSP and the number of years for which that data is available. If the main concern in testing upward mobility is for a long time frame, then it would seem that the network measures, because of the intensity of data required, are clearly not suitable for this endeavor. This problem would seem to point once again to Terlouw but his six indicators are also somewhat data intensive and constrained his own success at a long-term analysis. One possible way to deal with this problem (although certainly not a definitive solution) is to utilize one indicator for each relevant dimension of power/control in the world-system (i.e., economic, military, and political). Although this method would certainly not produce the same amount of precision as network measures, it may be good enough without compromising the need to analyze a significantly long time frame.

Third, in relation to this issue, a problem also arises regarding "when" the measurement of WSP is taken relative to its comparison to averaged growth rates. For example, for Chase-Dunn the measurement of a state's WSP is taken in 1970 and compared to its average annual growth rate from 1971 to 1980. For Terlouw, the measurement of a state's WSP is taken in 1985 and compared to its average annual growth rate from 1960 to 1985. This procedure assumes that states do not undergo upward or downward mobility within the specified time frame and are therefore static throughout. For example, if Japan's WSP was measured in 1960 and compared to its average annual rate of growth from 1960 to 1985, the analysis would incorrectly treat this

state as semiperipheral for the entire 25 year period when in fact it had ascended to the core in the mid-1970s. Depending on the time period examined, it would seem that a minimum of ten year intervals should be apportioned for measuring WSP to provide an accurate snapshot of the world-system at any given point in time.

Finally, although he is able to display a descriptive correlation, Terlouw's categorization of states into five groups to compare growth rates seems rather arbitrary and misleading. One is left wondering why the interval of 25 was chosen to divide up the various states from 1 to 100 and why the final category of "most corelike" only included eight. Ultimately, the answer to the question, "where is the middle?," is impossible to consistently specify categorically. Chase-Dunn's method of placing states along a continuum deals better with the issue of bias because it eliminates the need to create cutting points. Using this method, the position of the semiperiphery will be located roughly around the midpoint of the distribution of attribute scores.

## AN IMPROVED TEST OF THE MOBILITY HYPOTHESIS

This section seeks to offer an improved test of semiperipheral mobility that incorporates Chase-Dunn's inverted U-shaped hypothesis and his ratio-level conceptualization of WSP and upward mobility. I also adopt Terlouw's multiple indicator method that measures three dimensions of power/control (economic, political, and military) in the world-system. In addition, I propose analyzing cross-national mobility at five-year intervals over a 25 year period to capture variation within the long

term trend.[2] The combination of these modifications highlights four specific advantages of this study: (1) multiple measures of world-system position (WSP) are used to avoid economic determinism and capture multiple levels of power/control in the world-system; (2) a total of 25 years is examined to observe the long term trend of upward mobility; (3) statistical analysis is carried out at five-year intervals to capture short term variation; and (4) WSP is conceptualized as a continuous variable to avoid creating statistical cutting-points.

Following the theoretical assumptions of Arrighi (1986, 1990, 1991), Boswell (1985), Chase-Dunn (1988, 1990), Chase-Dunn and Hall (1997), and Wallerstein (1976, 1979, 1984), it is hypothesized that semiperipheral states will experience higher levels of upward mobility than either core or peripheral regions over time. Therefore, the independent variable (I.V.) in this hypothesis is the *relative position* of states in the world-system. To operationalize this concept, I compile a continuous measure of WSP that combines economic, political, and military measures into a composite index. Those measures include: gross domestic product, military expenditures, size of armed forces, and number of permanent diplomats at the United Nations headquarters in New York. Because these measures involve different units (i.e., dollars and people), all the data are transformed by taking their square root to reduce skewness, converting them to z-scores, and adding them together to create one composite score, or index, for each state.[3]

The four measures of world-system position cover a 26 year time-period from 1970 to 1995 and are compiled independently from various sources. To represent economic strength, *gross domestic product (GDP)* is used because it denotes the total economic

output of a state. GDP figures are compiled from the 1997 World Bank CD ROM, *World Development Indicators* and converted to constant 1987 dollars using the 1996 Consumer Price Index (CPI) produced by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. To represent military strength, *military expenditure* and *size of armed forces* are used because they represent both the technological strength of a state and its raw "manpower."[4] Both measures are compiled from various volumes of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency's *World Military Expenditures and Armed Transfers (MEAT)* and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) *Yearbook of World Armaments and Disarmaments*. Military expenditure figures are also converted to constant 1987 dollars using the CPI from 1996. To represent political power, the *number of permanent missions* (i.e., diplomats) at the United Nations Headquarters are used because they denote the lobbying effectiveness of a state in the international political arena and follow a logic of "strength in numbers." This measure is compiled from various volumes of the U.N. document entitled *Permanent Missions to the U.N.*

The dependent variable (D.V.) in this hypothesis is the *degree of upward mobility* of states in the world-system. To operationalize this concept, average annual growth rates of the three measures of WSP from 1971 to 1995 are used as an indicator of this variable. Growth rates are also converted to z-scores and added together to create one composite score, or index, for each state. However, growth rates are not transformed because their computation involves values that are already transformed. Average annual growth rates are calculated using the following mathematical formula: WSP measure at year 2 – WSP measure at year 1/WSP measure at year 1. For example, if a state's GDP increased from

4 million to 7 million from 1970 to 1971 the rate of growth in 1971 would be .75 (7 million – 4 million/4 million = 3 million/4 million = .75).

In order to increase the sample size and capture upward mobility at several points from 1971 to 1995, each measure of world-system position and its subsequent growth rate are averaged over a five-year time period (therefore allowing for some missing data points) to produce five distinct time blocks (1971-5, 1976-80, 1981-85, 1986-90, and 1991-5). Five separate statistical analyses are run on each time block regressing average growth rates of WSP on average WSP.

## STATISTICAL RESULTS

Since high growth rates are predicted to proliferate in the middle of the distribution (i.e., the semiperiphery) and lower growth rates are predicted at the extremes (i.e., the core and the periphery), the hypothesized model is expected to conform to the following quadratic function:

$$y = a + b_1 x_1 - b_2 x_1^2$$

where $a$ = y-intercept of the curve

$b_1$ = Shift parameter

$b_2$ = Rate of curvature

The statistical interpretation focuses mainly on a significant p-value for each slope; the first slope ($b_1$) should be significantly positive and the second slope ($b_2$) should be

significantly negative. Correspondingly, if this relationship is accurate, each scatterplot should reveal an approximate inverted U-shaped distribution.

The descriptive statistics given in Table 1 display the independent variables (aggregate cross-national WSP) and the dependent variables (aggregate cross-national growth rates in WSP) for each time block. Each aggregate time block in WSP represents the average z-score of the transformed (i.e., square root) values for all countries for each five-year period. For example, WSP 1971-1975 represents the average z-scores of the transformed values for the index of WSP for all countries from 1971 to 1975. Likewise, GROW 1971-1975 represents the average z-score of the growth rates for WSP for all countries from 1971 to 1975. A list of the 95 cases (i.e., countries) is given in the Appendix.

**Table 1**: Descriptive Statistics

| Aggregate Interval | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WSP 1971-1975 | 95 | -3.23 | 18.02 | -8.99E-16 | 3.62 |
| WSP 1976-1980 | 95 | -3.41 | 17.74 | 7.91E-16 | 3.61 |
| WSP 1981-1985 | 95 | -3.41 | 17.73 | 9.61E-16 | 3.58 |
| WSP 1986-1990 | 95 | -3.27 | 19.00 | -4.44E-16 | 3.64 |
| WSP 1991-1995 | 95 | -3.34 | 19.68 | 7.46E-16 | 3.68 |
| GROW 1971-1975 | 95 | -5.06 | 9.87 | 2.84E-16 | 2.41 |
| GROW 1976-1980 | 95 | -4.92 | 6.95 | -1.20E-16 | 2.02 |
| GROW 1981-1985 | 95 | -4.62 | 6.61 | 5.00E-16 | 2.16 |
| GROW 1986-1990 | 95 | -6.46 | 7.33 | 4.16E-17 | 2.34 |
| GROW 1991-1995 | 95 | -8.87 | 5.61 | -2.57E-16 | 2.08 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 95 | | | | |

WSP = World-System Position
GROW = Growth Rates in World-System Position

The statistical results for the first time block (regressing GROW7175 on WSP7175) are presented in Table 2 (see p. 84). Overall, very little variation in average annual growth rates from 1971 to 1975 is explained by average world-system position from 1971 to 1975. As noted by the R Square value of .03, only three percent of the variation in the dependent variable (growth rates) is explained by the independent variable (world-system position). In addition, the hypothesized quadratic relationship is not supported by the direction of the slopes listed under column B. The initial slope of the prediction line for smaller values of WSP (-.11) is negative (the opposite of the expected direction) and has no rate of curvature (.00) as values of WSP become squared. If the hypothesized relationship was supported by the data we would expect a positive slope for smaller values of WSP and a significantly negative rate of curvature as values of WSP became squared. Ultimately, the significance of both slopes (indicated under the Sig T column) exceeds the .05 alpha level required to reject the null hypothesis that they differ significantly from zero and therefore cannot be used to make any valid inferences regarding the population.

The scatterplot in Figure 1 (see p. 84) presents a useful visual picture of the results that is amenable to making a more substantive interpretation. Although the lowest rates of growth appear to fall near the lower levels of WSP (i.e., the periphery), the highest rates of growth are also located in this region. Lower levels of growth are certainly *not* located near the higher levels of WSP (i.e., the core) but there does not appear to be any support for higher levels of growth at median levels of WSP (i.e., the semiperiphery).

**Table 2:** Regression Results (1971-1975)

Dependent variable = GROW7175 Method = QUADRATIC

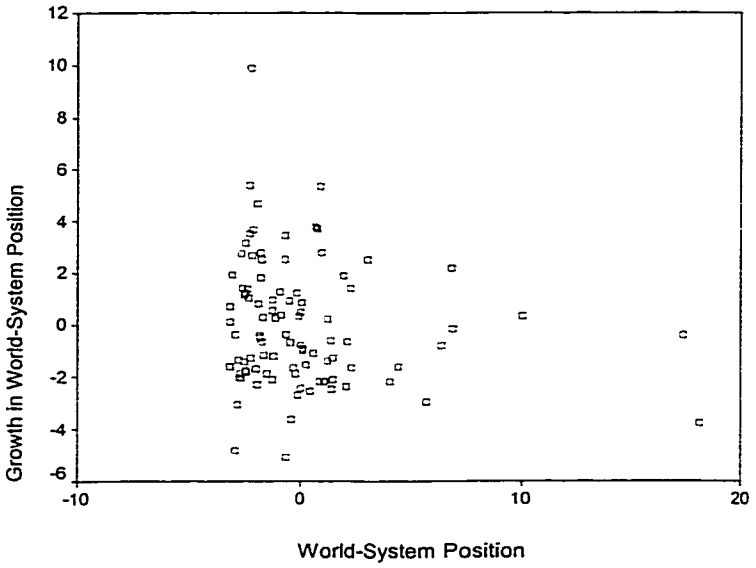
Listwise Deletion of Missing Data

| | |
|---|---|
| Multiple R | .16 |
| R Square | .03 |
| Adjusted R Square | .01 |
| Standard Error | 2.41 |

Independent Variables in the Equation

| Variable | B | SE B | Beta | T | Sig T |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WSP7175 | -.11 | .12 | -.17 | - .95 | .34 |
| WSP7175**2 | .00 | .01 | .01 | .06 | .96 |
| (Constant) | - .01 | .28 | | -.03 | .98 |

**Figure 1:** Cross-National Scatterplot (1971-1975)




The statistical results for the second time block (regressing GROW7680 on WSP7680) are presented in Table 3 (see p. 86). Overall, a slightly higher degree of variation in average annual growth rates from 1976 to 1980 is explained by average

world-system position from 1976 to 1980. As noted by the R Square value of .12, roughly twelve percent of the variation in the dependent variable (growth rates) is explained by the independent variable (world-system position). However, the hypothesized quadratic relationship is not supported by the direction of the slopes listed under column B. In fact, the results indicate almost the exact opposite relationship of the projected hypothesis. The initial slope of the prediction line for smaller values of WSP (-.33) is significantly negative (the opposite of the expected direction) and has a significantly positive, although small, rate of curvature (.02) as values of WSP become squared. The scatterplot for this time block in Figure 2 (see p. 86) clearly shows that the highest rates of growth are located near the lowest levels of WSP (i.e., the periphery) not the median levels (i.e., the semiperiphery).

Since both slopes are significant within the.05 alpha level (indicated under the Sig T column) we can reject the null hypothesis that they differ significantly from zero and can make valid inferences regarding the population for this time block: For each one unit increase in the z-score of the average square root value of WSP from 1976 to 1980 there is a corresponding decrease of -.33 in the z-score of the average annual growth rate of WSP from 1976 to 1980. Likewise, for every one unit increase in the z-score of the average square root value of $WSP^2$ from 1976 to 1980 there is a corresponding increase of .02 in the z-score of the average annual growth rate of WSP from 1976 to 1980.

**Table 3**: Regression Results (1976-1980)

Dependent variable = GROW7680 Method = QUADRATIC

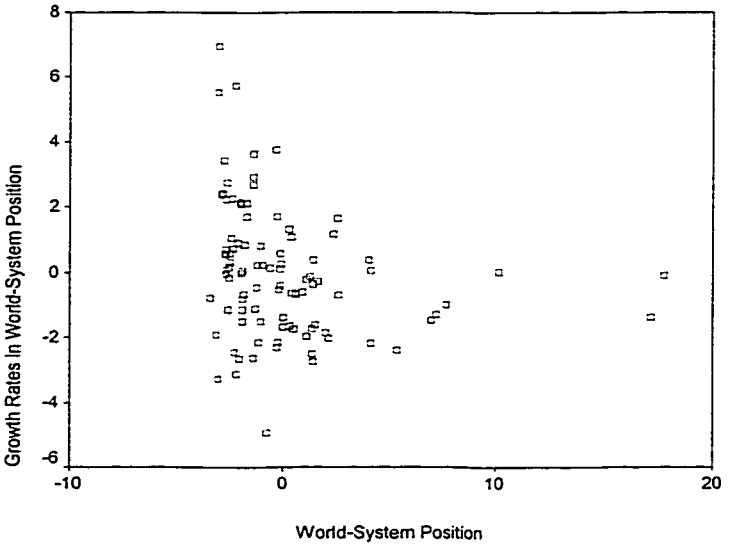
Listwise Deletion of Missing Data

| | |
|---|---|
| Multiple R | .34 |
| R Square | .12 |
| Adjusted R Square | .10 |
| Standard Error | 1.92 |

Independent Variables in the Equation

| Variable | B | SE B | Beta | T | Sig T |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WSP7680 | -.33 | .10 | -.58 | -3.41 | .00 |
| WSP7680**2 | .02 | .01 | .42 | 2.44 | .02 |
| (Constant) | -.24 | .22 | | -1.09 | .28 |

**Figure 2**: Cross-National Scatterplot (1976-1980)




The statistical results for the third time block (regressing GROW8185 on WSP8185) are presented in Table 4 (see p. 87). Again, very little variation in average annual growth rates from 1981 to 1985 is explained by average world-system position from 1981 to

1985. As noted by the R Square value of .03, approximately three percent of the variation in the dependent variable (growth rates) is explained by the independent variable (world-system position). In addition, the hypothesized quadratic relationship is not supported by the direction of the slopes listed under column B. The initial slope of the prediction line for smaller values of WSP (-.16) is negative (the opposite of the expected direction) and has virtually no rate of curvature (.01) as values of WSP become squared. Ultimately, the significance of both slopes (indicated under the Sig T column) exceeds the .05 alpha level required to reject the null hypothesis that they differ significantly from zero and therefore cannot be used to make any valid inferences regarding the population.

Once again, the scatterplot in Figure 3 (see p. 88) reveals that the highest and lowest rates of growth occur primarily near the lower levels of WSP (i.e., the periphery) while cases near the higher levels of WSP (i.e., the core) cluster around zero rate of growth.

**Table 4**: Regression Results (1981-1985)

Dependent variable = GROW8185 Method = QUADRATIC

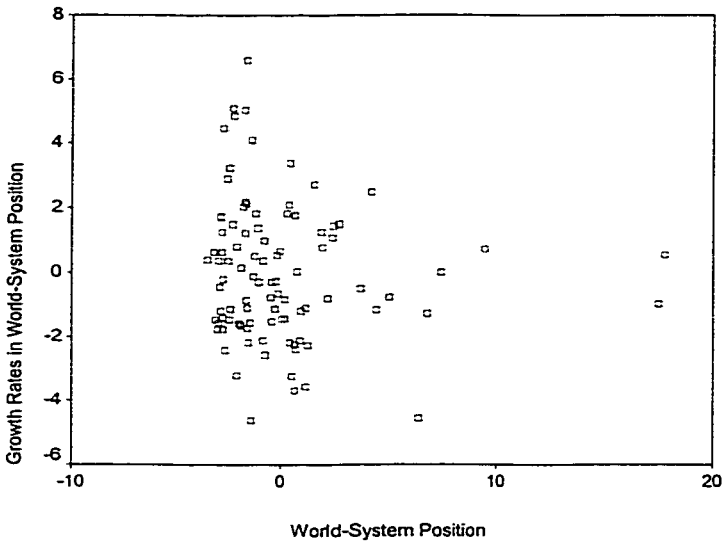
Listwise Deletion of Missing Data

| | |
|---|---|
| Multiple R | .16 |
| R Square | .03 |
| Adjusted R Square | .00 |
| Standard Error | 2.15 |

Independent Variables in the Equation

| Variable | B | SE B | Beta | T | Sig T |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WSP8185 | -.16 | .12 | -.27 | -1.52 | .13 |
| WSP8185**2 | .01 | .01 | .20 | 1.12 | .27 |
| (Constant) | -.12 | .25 | | -.49 | .63 |

**Figure 3**: Cross-National Scatterplot (1981-1985)




The statistical results for the forth time block (regressing GROW8690 on WSP8690) are presented in Table 5 (see p. 89). No variation in average annual growth rates from 1986 to 1990 is explained by average world-system position from 1986 to 1990 as noted by the R Square value of .00. Indeed, because both slopes are zero (WSP8690 = .00; $WSP8690^2$ = -.00), the best fitting line for this distribution is probably a horizontal line at the mean. Appropriately, the significance of both slopes (indicated under the Sig T column) far exceeds the .05 alpha level required to reject the null hypothesis that they differ significantly from zero and therefore cannot be used to make any valid inferences regarding the population. Indeed, the scatterplot in Figure 4 (see p. 89) clearly shows that there is an approximately even number of countries above and below zero rate of growth on the y-axis.

**Table 5**: Regression Results (1986-1990)

Dependent variable = GROW8690 Method = QUADRATIC

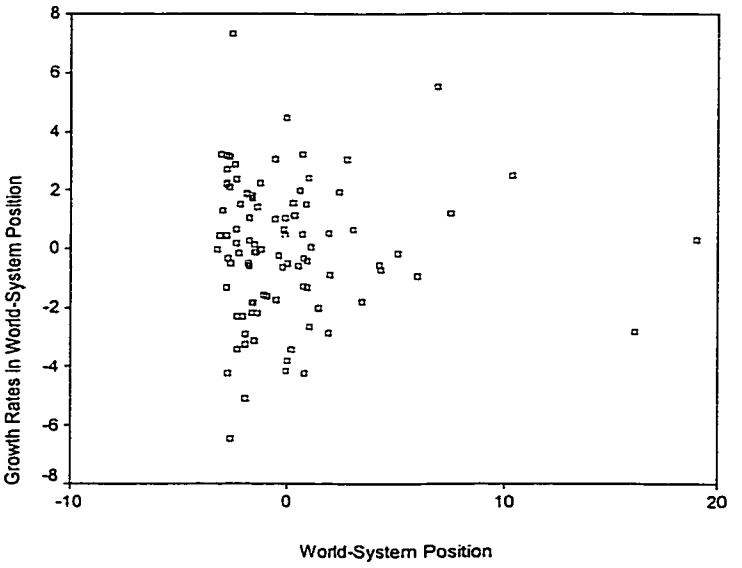
Listwise Deletion of Missing Data

| | |
|---|---|
| Multiple R | .00 |
| R Square | .00 |
| Adjusted R Square | -.02 |
| Standard Error | 2.37 |

Independent Variables in the Equation

| Variable | B | SE B | Beta | T | Sig T |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WSP8690 | .00 | .12 | .00 | .00 | 1.00 |
| WSP8690**2 | .00 | .01 | .00 | .00 | 1.00 |
| (Constant) | .00 | .27 | | .00 | 1.00 |

**Figure 4**: Cross-National Scatterplot (1986-1990)




Finally, the statistical results for the fifth time block (regressing GROW9195 on WSP9195) are presented in Table 6 (see p. 90). As before, very little variation in average

annual growth rates from 1991 to 1995 is explained by average world-system position from 1991 to 1995. As noted by the R Square value of .03, about three percent of the variation in the dependent variable (growth rates) is explained by the independent variable (world-system position). Interestingly, this analysis produced the closest approximation of the hypothesized quadratic relationship in terms of the direction of the slopes but neither is very strong in either direction. In addition, neither achieves the appropriate significance level necessary to warrant any valid inferences regarding the population. Examination of the scatterplot in Figure 5 (see p. 91) produces a similar observation to the previous result in that, disregarding the one outlier near -8 for growth, the best fitting line for this distribution is probably a horizontal line at the mean; there is an approximately even number of countries above zero growth as there are below it.

**Table 6**: Regression Results (1991-1995)

Dependent variable = GROW9195 Method = QUADRATIC

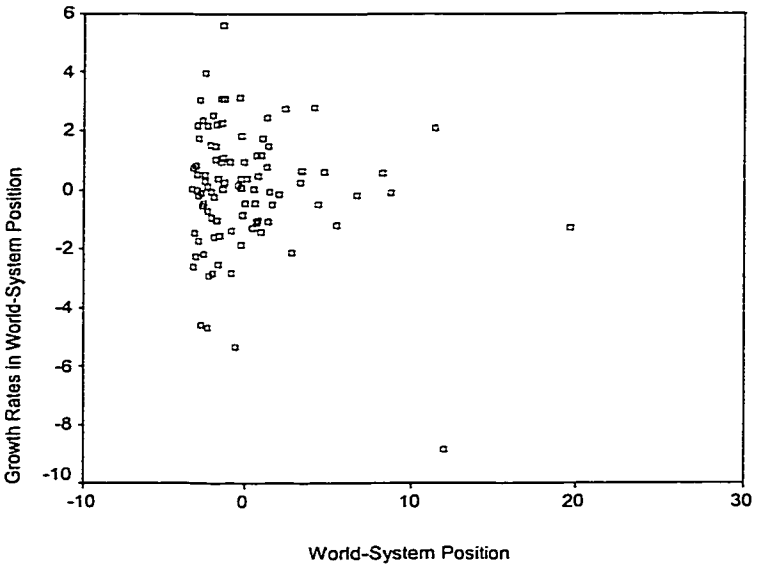
Listwise Deletion of Missing Data

| | |
|---|---|
| Multiple R | .17 |
| R Square | .03 |
| Adjusted R Square | .01 |
| Standard Error | 2.07 |

Independent Variables in the Equation

| Variable | B | SE B | Beta | T | Sig T |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WSP9195 | .01 | .10 | .01 | .06 | .95 |
| WSP9195**2 | -.01 | .01 | -.18 | -1.05 | .30 |
| (Constant) | .11 | .24 | | .47 | .64 |

**Figure 5**: Cross-National Scatterplot (1991-1995)




For the time period under consideration here, it would appear that the hypothesis of semiperipheral mobility is largely an illusion. No inverted U-shaped relationship between world-system position and growth rates appeared in any of the five separate regression analyses. The only consistent pattern found in the data followed less of a curvilinear function and more of a reverse fan-shaped distribution. By this I mean that in each scatterplot the few countries that lay toward the higher levels of WSP (i.e., the core) hovered around the mean growth rate of zero but as the level of WSP approached the lower levels (i.e., toward the periphery) significantly more countries fanned out in both directions of high and low growth. Thus, it would appear that, from 1971 to 1995, the periphery consistently experienced the highest (and lowest) rates of growth in the world-system. Future analyses of cross-national mobility should take this finding into account.

NOTES

[1] The reader is referred to Grimes (1996, 59-61) for a detailed explanation of this equation.

[2] For example, if one were to compare the WSP of Japan in 1990 to its growth in WSP from 1970 to 1990, significant variation would be missed because Japan (by most academic accounts) was a semiperipheral state during the 1970s but rose to core status by the 1980s. Therefore, Japan would be erroneously labeled as core for the entire 20-year period when in fact it was semiperipheral for most of the 1970s. Both Chase-Dunn (1990) and Terlouw (1992, 1993) utilize this method of measuring WSP only at the end of the time period for which mobility is analyzed.

[3] Taking the square root was deemed more appropriate because it *reduced* the skewness involved in cross-national comparisons but did not *eliminate* the absolute distance between states that occurs when the log is used. One problem that occurs with taking the square root is that it is more difficult to find the middle of a distribution because cases do not line up as tightly as they do when the log is used.

[4] Although both measures correlate to some degree, it has been argued in the literature that neither measure taken separately fully captures military dominance in the world-system. For example, small, technically advanced states (such as Britain or Italy) may have superior weaponry but they do not have standing armies the size of some larger, less technically advanced states (such as China or India).

## CONCLUSION

The general objective of this thesis has been to amend, both theoretically and empirically, the ambiguous conceptualization of the semiperiphery as it is used in the world-systems literature. This objective was addressed first by exploring the social scientific context from which this literature has emerged over the past century. This legacy is revealed in chapter one as stemming initially from the early political economists of the late eighteenth century and, more specifically, from several key ideas of Marx, Luxemburg, and Lenin. Regarding Marx, world-systems theory is particularly indebted to his materialistic interpretation of history that viewed the rise and spread of capitalism as central to understanding the development of modern society. In addition, his emphasis on class conflict as part and parcel of historical development is carried over by both dependency and world-systems theorists in their conceptualization of core/periphery relations. With respect to Luxemburg and Lenin, both dependency and world-systems theories incorporated their concern for the negative effects of capitalist expansionism on less developed regions of the globe. The general contention that the expansion of capitalism compels the imperial quest for new markets was central to dependency theory accounts of Latin American countries and world-systems accounts of the historical development of a geographical division of labor (i.e., core, periphery, and semiperiphery).

World-system theory can also be seen as a direct descendent of the post-World War II

literature on national development that took shape amidst the rapid social changes of the time. Historical events such as the disruption of international trade during the two World Wars, the break-up of colonial empires, the restructuring of political alliances, and the proliferation of information on global poverty were particularly influential in the evolution of development thinking in the mid-twentieth century. Modernization theory was one of the main intellectual products of the post-war era that was concerned with disparities in economic development. Strongly influenced by the hegemonic ascent of the United States following World War II, proponents of this approach viewed the development of nation-states as a natural progression through various stages from traditional, agrarian structures to the modern, industrialized achievements of the West. With the direct infusion of Western capital, technology, and expertise, modernization theory contended that Third World countries could speed up their transition from "primitive" stagnation to "higher" levels of development. Latin American dependency theorists vociferously challenged this perspective in the 1960s and reacted strongly against the pro-Western bias of modernization theory. Like its predecessor, dependency theory also tried to explain why Third World countries were unable to develop their economies to the levels of countries in the First World. But, instead of viewing all societies as progressing along an evolutionary path towards modernity, this school of thought focused on the vestiges of colonialism and relationships of unequal exchange in the international division of labor as constituting the key obstacles to the development of the Third World. Conceptualized as center/periphery relations, dependency theory took pains to detail the exploitative nature of economic relationships between developing

regions and advanced capitalist countries.

Following an overview of world-systems theory itself, chapter two reviews more specific theoretical accounts concerning the semiperiphery. Initial precursors to this concept are discussed, particularly Marini's (1965, 1972) analysis of Brazilian subimperialism and Galtung's (1971, 1976) notion of "go-between" nations. Within the world-systems perspective itself, the main explications of semiperipheral development are provided by Wallerstein (1976, 1979, 1982, 1984), Arrighi (1986,1990, 1991), Chase-Dunn (1990), Chase-Dunn and Hall (1991, 1993, 1994, 1997), and scholars at the Fernand Braudel Center's World Labor Research Working Group (1995). At the most general level these accounts are explicit in reference to the semiperiphery as an intermediate level of regional development. Taken together, however, they identify a manifold list of characteristics potentially attributable to the semiperiphery. Although this concept has been a welcome addition to the dyadic models of dependency theory (i.e., center/periphery), many scholars continue to criticize its usage as lacking theoretical coherence. Therefore, in an effort to ameliorate this ambiguity, chapter two concludes with a typology of semipheripheral characteristics that synthesizes and integrates the relevant literature on the subject. This typology is organized into four main categories – economic, politico-military, geo-political, and socio-cultural – which represent the primary dimensions, or realms, of semiperipheral activity in the modern world-system. While this effort is partially successful, I believe, in systematizing a disparate literature, it falls short of providing definitional parsimony. Indeed, the number of distinct characteristics that are delineated – seventeen in total – would seem to point to the

conclusion that the concept of the semiperiphery is still relatively under-theorized. Indeed, using the adjective "semiperipheral" to describe a political unit or geographical region can imply so many things at once that its application is useful only in a general or heuristic sense. Future research may be well served to utilize the typology presented in chapter two as a guiding framework with which to analyze future cases of potential semiperipherality. Hopefully, further investigation would begin to narrow the range of characteristics that remain salient, both presently and historically, and explicate the conditions under which a smaller set of characteristics is adequate to identify the semiperiphery.

Specifically, one area for future research on the role of the semiperiphery could build upon the current debate regarding the effects of transnational corporate penetration on the growth of developing economies.[1] Original world-systems research on this subject (Bornschier, Chase-Dunn, and Rubinson 1978; Bornschier and Chase-Dunn 1985) offered empirical evidence supporting two main conclusions: (1) a positive correlation between rates of foreign, direct investment of transnational corporations and domestic rates of inequality in developing countries; and (2) a negative correlation between rates of foreign, direct investment of transnational corporations and rates of economic growth in developing countries. Recently, Glenn Firebaugh (1992) spearheaded a wave of critiques against these findings and argued that the models used were mathematically flawed and, when corrected, empirically unsubstantiated. While this debate rages on, none of the studies conducted thus far have disaggregated the effects of transnational corporate penetration by region. In other words, the data on foreign direct investment are pooled as

are the widespread effects of economic growth and inequality. This gap in the research presents opportunities for world-systems studies to address more specifically the effects of foreign direct investment from the core, for example, on semiperipheral economies as well as the effects of foreign direct investment from the semiperiphery on peripheral economies.

The empirical analysis of chapter three sets out to test one of the prevailing assumptions of world-systems scholars regarding the semiperiphery – a higher rate of economic growth and/or upward mobility by the semiperiphery in core/periphery hierarchies over time, especially during periods of global economic downturn. Based on previous efforts by Chase-Dunn (1988, 1990) and Terlouw (1992, 1993), an improved test of this hypothesis is proposed that builds upon these analyses of semiperipheral mobility while mediating a larger debate in this literature regarding how to operationalize world-system position. Ultimately, four main correctives are emphasized in this analysis: (1) the use of multiple measures of world-system position (political, economic, and military) to avoid economic determinism and capture multiple levels of power and control in the world-system; (2) the examination of an extended time period (1971-1995) to observe the long-term process of upward mobility; (3) the measurement of world-system position at five-year intervals to capture short-term variation; and (4) the conceptualization of world-system position as a continuous variable to avoid arbitrary statistical cutting points. While the results offered no statistical support for the regular incidence of heightened semiperipheral mobility from 1971-1995, there are two possibilities for future research that may potentially resuscitate this hypothesis.

Future tests may also be inclined to explore the relationship of semiperipheral mobility to both Kondratieff waves (K-waves) and the hegemonic sequence. K-waves are long-term cycles of global economic activity in which production, investment, and prices oscillate between growth (A-phases) and stagnation (B-phases) within an approximately 40 to 60-year period (Chase-Dunn 1989). According to Wallerstein (1976), the possibility of actual "upward mobility" of a semiperipheral state (to core status) is rare, but it is more likely during periods of economic stagnation in the global economy. During moments of world economic downturn, Wallerstein maintains, semiperipheral countries can expand their overall control of the world market. By attempting to shift the mix of their activities in a more "core-like" direction (primarily through transformative political action), semiperipheral countries can more immediately and directly affect the commodity chains of the world-economy, especially when rivalry between core states is most intense (i.e., during periods of world economic stagnation). In the last century the pattern of Kondratieff waves has been as follows (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1982, 118):

| | |
|---|---|
| Phase A | 1850-1873 |
| Phase B | 1873-1897 |
| Phase A | 1897-1920 |
| Phase B | 1920-1945 |
| Phase A | 1945-1967 |
| Phase B | 1967-? |

The fact that the time period under investigation here (1971-1995) falls largely within the most recent B-phase and, yet, displays no tendency for semiperipheral mobility is an initial hitch for future research on this relationship.

"The hegemonic sequence . . . refers to a fluctuation of hegemony versus

multicentricity in the distribution of military power and economic competitive advantage in production among core states" (Chase-Dunn 1989, 50). According to Chase-Dunn, hegemonic periods are those in which a large share of both economic and military power is concentrated in a single core state (i.e., hegemon). Multicentric periods are those in which a more equal distribution of economic and military power exists among core states. Hopkins and Wallerstein (1982) identify three historical instances of hegemonic maturity in the world-system since the sixteenth century: the United Provinces of the Netherlands (ca. 1620-1650), the United Kingdom of Great Britain (ca. 1850-1873), and the United States of America (ca. 1945-1967). Following periods of maturity, world-system theorists describe a subsequent period of hegemonic decline which is characterized by increasing economic competition in the core and the relative loss of competitive advantage by the former hegemon. What this cycle implies for the possibilities of semiperipheral advance is open for debate. Nonetheless, based on the analysis presented herein, the reality of semiperipheral mobility during supposed U.S. hegemonic decline from 1971-1995 is largely elusive. Ultimately, adequate exploration of the relationship between semiperipheral mobility and both K-waves and the hegemonic sequence will require a much longer time frame than the 25-year period explored here. Since reliable cross-national data are difficult to aggregate prior to 1950, historical case studies may offer a more immediate empirical option.

NOTES

[1] For principal accounts of both sides of this debate see Firebaugh and Beck (1994) and Dixon and Boswell (1996).

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## APPENDIX

Case Sample (N = 95)

Algeria
Argentina
Australia
Austria
Barbados
Belgium
Benin
Bolivia
Botswana
Brazil
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cameroon
Canada
Central Af. Rep.
Chile
China
Colombia
Congo
Costa Rica
Cote d'Ivoire
Czech Republic
Denmark
Dominican Rep.
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Fiji
Finland
France
Gabon
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guyana
Haiti
Honduras
Hungary
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Kenya
Korea, South
Kuwait
Lesotho
Luxembourg
Madagascar
Malawi
Malaysia
Mali
Malta
Mauritania
Mexico
Morocco
Nepal
Netherlands
New Zealand
Niger
Nigeria
Norway
Oman
Pakistan
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Philippines
Portugal
Russian Fed.
Rwanda
Saudi Arabia
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Singapore
South Africa
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Swaziland
Sweden
Switzerland
Thailand
Togo
Tunisia
Turkey
United Kingdom
United States
Uruguay
Venezuela
Zambia