

Global Politics: Is It an Un-centralizing New World Order? (REVIEW ESSAY)

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Introduction

“World politics is changing, too,” so says Dirk Messner (2011, p. 217).

It is doing so in a way that even anchor countries are becoming important players no less. Some even advance to the level of being key actors in world politics, to a point that they are challenging the leadership of the West that has held sway for the past couple of centuries.

Thus, as one contemporary theme in political development discourse, this review essay largely gravitates around at least five main works by scholars of respectable note. It is a humble attempt to map, conceptually and theoretically, whether or not global politics is un-centralizing or otherwise centralizing. It is a concept that seems so fresh from the crib.

The central concept of this review, however loosely-titled, brings into academic exchanges comparable, even sometimes contrasting, views, arguments, and insights on a single unifying theme and its subthemes. Global politics is the main theoretical framework, and the issue sought to be examined is precisely on whether academics or scholars may now speak with authority on how current global arrangements have

set to un-centralize or centralize everything else below or around it. Admittedly, the drivers of global change are much too myriad.

We deem as within our range of understanding this conception of *un-centralizing* and *centralizing*. They have been sufficiently encompassed in the ensuing intellectual exchanges of the five chosen works and their leading lights.

Selected Academic Materials

The works reviewed in this essay to provide the roadmap for discussion are those of:

Cleveland, Harlan (2002). "The Donald C. Stone Lecture: The Future is Uncentralized" in Peter Kobraak, *The Political Environment of Public Management*. Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers, Inc.: New York

Evans, Peter (1996). "Government Action, Social Capital and Development: Reviewing the Evidence on Synergy". *World Development* Vol. 24, No. 6. Pp. 1119-1132

Farazmand, Ali (2002). "Globalization and Public Administration" in Peter Kobraak, *The Political Environment of Public Management*. Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc.: New York

Kinsella, David, Bruce Russett & Harvey Starr (2013). *World Politics: The Menu for Choice*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning: USA

Newman, Peter & Andy Thornley (2011). *Planning World Cities: Globalization and Urban Politics*. Palgrave Macmillan: England

The twin streams of un-centralizing and centralizing effects that shape the emerging phenomenon of globalization beg for some answers.

The books *World Politics: The Menu for Choice* by David Kinsella, Bruce Russett, and Harvey Starr, and *Planning World Cities: Globalization and Urban Politics* by Peter Newman and Andy Thornley navigate the theme of global politics from the perspectives of policy analysts and urban planners, respectively.

The two articles in Peter Kobraak's book, *The Political Environment of Public Management*, are the work of Harlan Cleveland, "The Future is Uncentralized,"

and of Ali Farazmand, “Globalization and Public Administration,” which is fully covered in Part IX of the book *Globalization and the Future of Public Management*. These were chosen to give the more critical discussion of global politics its so-called public administration flavor. Cleveland’s interesting description of the twenty-first century as one on “how to organize without centralizing” introduced the concept of “chaord,” a fusion of chaos and order, in the lingua franca (2002, 399). On the other hand, Farazmand (2002, 408) divined the new world order as a “system of collective world security where states and peoples can live in peace with each other, ideologies aside.” Both specimen articles of Cleveland (Kobrak 2002, p. 397) and Farazmand (Kobrak, p. 406) appeared in the *Public Administrative Review* or in Vol. 60, No. 4 (July/August 2000) pp. 293-297 and Vol. 59, No. 6 (November/December 1999), pp. 509-522, respectively.

The work of Peter Evans, *Government Action, Social Capital and Development: Reviewing the Evidence of Synergy*, essentially examines the synergy based on “ties that cross the public-private divide” (1996, 1119) and the work clearly contributes to the understanding of world development from the perspective of Third World countries (i.e., “East Asian Miracle”).

Thus the criteria for the selection of all the five materials could be said to be that they represent roots from the same tree: while they come from different theoretical frameworks or perspectives, the arguments of Kinsella et al., Newman and Thornely, Cleveland, Farazmand, and Evans have a unifying thread, that of the element of choice. All these consist of a rich enough literature on the topic of global politics, and more so on its un-centralizing or centralizing effect, it is hoped.

In the interest of a fairly smooth flow of discussion, let this review essay take its moorings from the following central themes:

- 1) the role of choice or decision environment
- 2) American hegemonic cycle—fact or myth
- 3) global economy or the new world order
- 4) “nobody-in-charge systems”
- 5) “menu for choice”

It is understood that the essay does not limit the reach of the works by our cited authors or scholars on other sub-themes or secondary topics of interest that future or further researches may require. It is only carefully thought out that somehow relevant connections could already highlight their major views or arguments as regard global politics understood as the intersection between choice, constraints, and challenges in the context of world trends at nearly all dimensions of state, corporate, or industrial engagement.

Dialogues, Conversations, and Synthetics

Role of Choice or Decision Environment

Evan's argument for "state-society synergy" reconstructs, to my belief, the role of choice or decision environment. This view invariably underscores the crucial role of "social capital, character of the state apparatus, and the formal political rules or the social structure" (Evans 1996, 1119).

It is important to emphasize that "stocks of social capital accumulated over long periods of time (i.e., hundreds of years) were the crucial ingredients in creating the 'virtuous circle' in which civic engagement nurtured good government and good government in turn fostered civic engagement" (Evans 1996, 1124). That is not to say that the other link, like the state apparatus itself, has become less crucial.

The restaurant menu argument of Kinsella et al. articulates that choices or decisions are made given certain sets of options or policy outcomes where actors are akin to players in a game. In fact, the authors found useful the mathematical implications of discipline-related concepts (i.e., lingua franca) as "prisoner's dilemma," "tragedy of the commons," "free rider," "game theory," and the like in going about decision making.

Newman and Thornley take to the more definitive view that "decision-making processes play an active part in the interplay of local and global forces." While they realize the "context-shaping forces of economic globalization," the authors still throw suspicion on whether or not "these push all cities along the same path of urban development" (2011, p. 9). It is clear that city governments should not be 'passive recipients of external impacts' according to these scholars. Choices in this case, to

use Huntington's line, could be "sterile" or free from external influence. The political economies of South Korea, Japan, and Singapore demonstrate this point at least in so far as these cities in Asia Pacific do in fact grow without these "forces and agencies?" (Newman & Thornley 2001, p. 9).

The particular mention of these Asian countries is not necessarily implicit of any form or degree of so-called isolationist policies especially when some governments in the global arena manifest their own direction and behavior in relation to the more dominant forces of globalization. It is only in explanation of some validated facts that in effect show that governments cut a choice between being a passive recipient of external impacts or otherwise opt to use a "lifeline," as it were, that makes it practical rather than costly to tread certain development objectives. In a customary sense, development simply refers to external aid.

When Cleveland claims the "future is un-centralized," it is actually in answer to the question of just how corporations are going to govern themselves in the future (2002, 397). Justifiably enough, he conveniently gave the case of VISA International with its 22,000 financial institutions boasting \$1.25 trillion in combined credit card sales. Thus, citing Hock, Cleveland has advanced a view on how to organize without centralizing, with his keyword "chaord" as the fusion of chaos and order (Cleveland 2002, 399).

Thus, to excerpt from Cleveland (2002, 400), this much is said,

The real-life management of peace worldwide seems bound to require a Madisonian world of bargains and accommodations among national and functional 'factions', a world in which people are able to agree on what to do next together without feeling the need (or being dragooned by some global government) to agree on religious creeds, economic canons, or political credos.

Indeed this view is still consistent with his original assertion of a "nobody-in-charge" concept. While Cleveland examines the future from a purely organizational lens, by and large the global panorama casts clear lines of engagement, systems, and processes, and precisely such experiment of un-centralized governance comes into play in global politics. It does away with hierarchies and pyramids to "nobody-in-charge systems" or what Charles Lindblom also terms as "mutual adjustment in a generally understood environment" (Cleveland 2002, 402).

Farazmand, on the other hand, subscribes to the view that globalism and globalization are phenomena that were the “products of the dynamic nature of rapid accumulation of surplus at the global level” (2002, 407). He described what globalization is from various perspectives, but the central logic is one of cause and effect. His long discourse on the causes and consequences of globalization are essentially an explanation of the challenges that the discipline of public administration faces, with public administrators as the change agents. Farazmand (2002, 422) calls it the “new stage of human civilization”.

American Hegemonic Cycle—Fact or Myth

Farazmand (2002, 418), for one, fully subscribes to the idea of American hegemony and that globalization is the handiwork of the “great capitalist democracies of the West.”

Cleveland, in speaking on very large systems that now have gone global in scale in the twentieth century (i.e., global information systems, currency and commodity markets, epidemic controls, worldwide credit cards, and the like), has only confirmed this hegemony when he said, “It is no accident of history that American leadership and imagination were the priceless ingredient(s) in developing each of these systems” (2002, 402).

On the other hand, Farazmand says, “The forces pushing toward a dark global future can be countered by democratic forces that recognize the need to counterbalance the economic power of capitalism with the political power of democracy” (2002, 406). In other words, political development as much spurs economic development, and vice versa, to the extent that in an otherwise rapacious capitalist system, the capitalist greed is effectively “moderated” by democratic forces and their political countervailing effect.

Again, along the same vein, the complementary view of Cleveland, who says that “America must take the lead in building a club of democratic equals” (2002, 406), actually presents the more optimistic view compared to the very pessimism of Farazmand.

Evans takes a more myopic appreciation, from a rather inward looking perspective, of Third World countries in terms of the synergy of government action, social capital, and development. In his article, it must have been implied that even his concept of “rule-governed environment” (Evans 1996, 1120) somehow presupposes “networks of ties that connect state agencies and private capital” (Evans 1996, 1120 and 1122). Such methodological myopia self-defines its own role in the emerging hegemony.

This reviewer contends that even the little successes of a capitalist order in a Third World country is reflective of a global capitalist order, and no matter how hesitant is Evans to admit it, some inferences could be drawn of the workings of the capitalist system. Hence, institutions like the World Bank, the IMF, and the like are there to explain that supposed-to-be public-private ties are somehow linked globally while they seem to happen locally.

But each time the rules of the game are changed, certain problems also spring up.

Newman and Thornley, in trying to trace the historical beginnings of globalization, have applied the so-called world-systems school of analysis (citing Wallerstein and Arrighi). Thus, they readily acknowledge the American “hegemonic cycle” to have “began around 1900 after the decline of the earlier British-led industrially based hegemony” (Newman and Thornley 2011, 18).

Where Kinsella, Russett, and Starr are concerned, they went as far as to define hegemony based on U.S. military and economic dominance. They said that in a hegemonic system, “One state is able and willing to determine and maintain the essential rules by which relations among states are governed.” The “hegemonial state not only can abrogate existing rules or prevent the adoption of rules it opposes but can also play the dominant role in constructing new rules” (Kinsella, Russett, and Starr 2013, 304).

In fact we agree that hegemony is a necessary mechanism for helping a group to achieve collective good, comparative advantage if you will. But each time the rules of the game are changed, certain problems also spring up. In so saying, this reviewer simply purveys the flashing red signals of emerging waves of threats to peace in humankind, if and when they happen. Understandably enough, authors Kinsella,

Russett, and Starr (2013, 305) made interesting reference to Pax Britannica and Pax Americana as the British Peace and American Peace where these two countries were the more renowned system leaders in economic and military supremacy.

Global Economy or the New World Order

Integration into the global economy has its benefits and its costs (Kinsella, Russett, and Starr 2013, 318). Kinsella argues that “if states were to adopt liberal international economic policies, they would also need to retain the capacity to intervene in order to cushion the economic and social dislocations their citizens were likely to experience once the national economy was exposed to international market forces” (Kinsella, Russett, and Starr 2013, 319).

For Newman and Thornley (2011, 197), the impact of integration finds its place in the “transformation of cities”. They argue that the “world cities of the region can take many different roles, including capital exporters, sites of global manufacturing production, a dominant entrepot function and even ‘amenity’ cities that use the environment to attract economic activity” (Newman and Thornley 2011, 197). Newman and Thornley correctly observe that global industrial centers like Bangkok, Jakarta, and Shanghai have shown decline in agriculture and a rise of industrial concentrations in the outer rings of the city, including government-sponsored industrial parks.

Evans (1996, 1121) is prepared to explain the state’s contribution to scale up “peasant social capital” in Mexico, to women’s income earning capacity in Ho Chi Minh, and to China’s would-be market economy.

Cleveland’s healthy acceptance of modern institutions led him to coin the concept of “compelled behavior,” which he described as “a disguised form of tyranny” (2002, 398). According to him, the “organization of the future will be the embodiment of community based on shared purpose calling to the higher aspirations of a people” (Cleveland 2002, 398). Apparently, he thought it to be an improbable accident that an un-centralized company (i.e., VISA International), three decades later, would handle the world’s largest block of consumer purchasing power.

As students or scholars of politics, development studies, and modernization, the theme and subject of global politics may be viewed as a rich frontier of interrogation or inquiry given that it does in fact and in effect traverse histories, economies, democracies, and ideologies to a marked degree or other. This reviewer sees this fine thread from their overarching views woven together neatly.

Indeed there are practical ideas of human organization, as Cleveland likewise believes that “there is no safe depository of ultimate powers of society but the people themselves” (2002, 400).

For Farazmand (2002, 405), his focus is more on the “increasing political and economic expansion of first world nations and global corporations and its implications for the developing world.” Thus he identifies certain analytical perspectives on globalization and the “new world order.” Apparently he foresees the merging or forming of partnerships on a global scale, the utilization of unregulated global money, and the capture by the “trilaterals” (referring to the US, Western Europe, and Japan) of such key international donor agencies as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. In short, Farazmand believes strongly in global hegemony and the dependence of less-developed nations on the trilateral countries (2002, 405).

With the aid of the Internet and other technological innovations, it has become clear that the dominance of a system leader is even made more convenient. Therefore, global developments in the economic scene probably follow the pace of these technologies.

Simply stated, the Internet, or an information technology environment, has become an enormous opportunity to exchange data and has been used very effectively in government, in governance, and in a whole spectrum of activities taking place at all levels. It is what Cleveland (2002, 397) describes as “uncentralized organizational arrangements.” In many ways, information technology innovations become a powerful agent, an enabler of change. In effect, it pretty much simplifies otherwise complex, slow, and probably insecure modes of business, transactions, exchanges, and the like.

'Nobody-In-Charge' Systems

Cleveland (2002, 402) makes interesting inferences from the fact that “very large systems, many of them global in scale, based on massive information outputs and widespread feedback, have been developed in the twentieth century, something that is unimaginable before the marriage of computers and telecommunications.” He observes that a great deal of un-centralized discretion is at work. Thus he rightly points out that the international foreign exchange market and the Internet are now the world’s two most pervasive “nobody-in-charge” systems.

Farazmand realizes significant expansion that benefits the first world at the expense of the developing world where the Internet and information technology have become new forms of liberalization (2002, 405). He rightly stated, “Global corporations were also assisted in their quest for new markets, cheap labor, and unrestricted production sites by such mechanisms as marketing simultaneously over the entire globe” (2002, 405).

Evans has said very little about this main thesis of Cleveland, but one can always draw some valid assumptions that private actors are the agents of multinational corporations in nearly all aspects of economic engagement.

Kinsella, Russett, and Starr would acknowledge what enables or otherwise constrains behavior in the case of economies, societies or cities.

Newman and Thornley (2011), for their part saw the “hallowing out of the nation-state” since the “nation-state has lost its power and ability to influence economic activity as transnational corporations now operate without reference to national boundaries in a borderless world” and that “imperialist forces of world markets have become more powerful than the states to which ultimate authority over society and economy is supposed to belong” (citing Ohmae, p. 28).

Menu for Choice

Of the five academic materials that are the subject of this review essay, the one that has formulated three levels of analysis, as a theoretical framework, must be the work of Kinsella, Russett, and Starr. These scholars make reference to a global society, a domestic society, and individual decision makers in a manner that explains

relationships or arrangements between and amongst them. In the end, world politics has become the menu for choice for developed and developing economies or democratic societies alike.

More importantly, there is, according to Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2013, p. 29) a value in “using social scientific method when the compass moves to contemporary world politics, international conflict and cooperation, international political economy, and the global future.” Methodologies in the social sciences are taken to mean that certain patterns of behavior occur with a degree of social scientific regularities that provide enough justification to generalize certain observations (i.e., case studies) from a field of like specimens or species.

Newman and Thornley (2011, p. 292), explaining the notion of “world city hypothesis,” opine that there is a larger context in “planning world cities” and that, in fact, “urban politics operates at a number of interconnecting levels.” In short, city leaders may lay claims on a global exemplary role for their world cities.

Evans’ peroration of “complementarity” convinces students of political development, public administration, and institutional economics that there may, in fact, be “two kinds of inputs that together result in greater output than either public or private sectors could deliver on their own” (Evans 1996, 1120). In other words, given certain choices or constraints, a rethinking of the public-private divide only underscores the importance of what Evans actually refers to as the “evidence on synergy” (Evans 1996, 1119).

Cleveland, for his part, theorizes a “bright future for complexity” (Cleveland 2002, 401) when he says, “The sheer complexity of what had to get done—by governments and corporations, but also by their myriad contractors and subcontractors and their nonprofit critics and cheerleaders—required huge numbers of people to exercise independent judgment, think for themselves, and consult with each other, not just do as they are told.” In short, it may well be true that the ultimate powers of society are the people themselves.

Apparently in China, when it permitted people’s free exercise of opinion and initiative, the first casualty was the Communist Party’s central control. Even Mao Tse Tung played with this idea for a while, which he called “many flowers blooming” (Cleveland 2002, 401). Cleveland contrasted this with the “underlying American

bias favoring looser systems—[which] was being reinforced by the dazzling progress of information technology and its impact on everything to the understanding of our universe” (Cleveland 2002, 401).

Farazmand’s view of globalization was that the spread of global capitalism may have made the state irrelevant or even obsolescent. Interestingly, he even thought of an end of work, and of public administration on account of this. Thus Farazmand tended to argue that global capitalism has led to the “generation of supra-state governing agencies that are supplementing if not supplanting the territorial nation-states” (2002, 407).

In sum, Farazmand was the only one who fully described the concept of globalization as follows:

- 1) an *internationalization* (beyond national jurisdictional boundaries)
- 2) a *border openness* (a unified global economy and homogenous global culture)
- 3) a *process* (continuing capital accumulation in modern capitalism)
- 4) an *ideology* (Western capitalist democracy as driving force)
- 5) a *phenomenon* (those that extend across widely dispersed locations simultaneously)
- 6) *both a transcending phenomenon and a process* (global capital accumulation with positive and negative effects everywhere)

Given the many intervening factors that influence decisions of states, in the end it is still the individual nation-state that decides its fate or destiny even in the center of global affairs and the attendant constant state of flux.

Conclusion

However good or bad the new world order would usher societies, economies, and democracies to the future, global politics has always been an exciting topic of interest in administrative studies/sciences, political development, and public administration for scholars and practitioners in these fields.

The selected materials aptly encompassed the three levels of analysis mentioned in the work of Kinsella, Russett, and Starr, namely, global society, domestic society,

and individual decision makers. The same conceptual moorings were adopted by Newman and Thornley in trying to situate the global and regional context of world cities (i.e., New York, London, Tokyo) and the other important cities in America, Europe, and Asia.

Both works of Cleveland and Farazmand intend to open a window on the effect of globalization in the discipline of public administration, specifically on the notion of “un-centralization” and the “nobody-in-charge” system. There are also the scholarly insights of Farazmand on the causes, consequences, and threats of globalization.

The work of Evans and the value of his theoretical myopia, in just trying to infer-globalization from the synergy in the social structure itself, is still useful in defining the role of social capital vis-à-vis development. It is akin to taking global developments from the pure perspective of Third World countries. Evans simply explains politics at close range. Or much simply put, global politics is viewed beginning with one state—that of a country’s own political economy.

Insights & Reflections

The materials selected for this review essay are deemed to have justified their relevant import to the theme of globalization and, more importantly, on the view that choices are, in truth, what Samuel Huntington fondly refers to as ‘consistent with nothing else’ (i.e. the president). Aptly stating, Huntington (1965, p. 413) says thus, “What’s good for the Presidency is good for the country” or put another way, ‘the power of the Presidency is identified with the good of the polity.’”

The new world order is more generally viewed as the imperialist tendencies of the capitalist system at a global scale and the countervailing guard against its greed or excesses would have been the role of democracies in these societies. Democracy as the antidote of capitalism may have to be contended given democracy’s long historical tradition of check and balance.

The Internet and telecommunication technologies made it more convenient for all stakeholders to keep abreast with the times from any corner of the globe. Computers have become the modern-day global radar screen where all places,

peoples, events, and motions take place. They make making choices a far less difficult affair. As Cleveland says, global information systems allowed for “a rapid response time.” And these technologies, unless undone, will be there for the long haul.

Even in the global environment itself, well-meaning institutions and the resolutions forged between and amongst nation-signatories only serve as “soft laws” to which governments are not bound to comply or abide, nor will these governments be meted sanctions by the convenors of these resolutions.

Globalization as a theme automatically situates itself in the historical landscape, and it cannot be belabored with too much of historicism. Globalization, as a field of political epistemology, has become an ‘interdisciplinary study’ since it actually covers the whole range of human undertaking—sovereignty, public, foreign policy, trade and the like.

As a phenomenon, it will soon be asked if it ever really promotes the general good. Obviously it would require a more critical in-depth study of the implications

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of free trade, protectionism, the flooding of capital, and the like, which are areas that may not have been contemplated by the particular materials selected for this review essay but nonetheless would have been equally interesting, especially for the economists.

Lastly, there are of course increasingly harmful effects of a fully globalized world economy, such as the role of transnational corporations in world development, but perhaps this is by way of adding more pieces to the puzzle—opportunities, risks and all. In good sense, everyone must inevitably sort of welcome the “birth of a new world” (Farazmand 2002, 406).

Suffice to state that there is the free exercise of choice amidst the influence of globalization – its many pressures and consequences, constrains and challenges. Globalization is here and it has become difficult to say that it will not stay forever. We can either benefit from it, or bear its costs.

In the case of future discourse on the theme and subject, this reviewer finds compelled to open little windows to the broader perspectives scoped in this review essay. In addition to the main references that are the subjects of this review, I hasten to touch on, even if only in passing, two more academic materials believed to cast light for students or scholars of public administration on the intersections of politics, development, and globalization.

Thus this reviewer takes the liberty to cite another academic material entitled *Global Leadership in Transition: Making the G20 More Effective and Responsive*. This book, edited by Colin Bradford and Wonhyuk Lim, is a comprehensive coverage of the G20, its role in the global economy, the system of international institutions, the dynamics of institutional innovations for the G20, as well as public attitudes in the G20 countries.

Offhand, it is said that “from a political perspective, the real merit of the G20 is that it can gradually build up global concerns and consensus among the major powers of the world in the long run” (Bradford and Lim 2011, 59).

Bradford and Lim (2011, 60) have aptly said that “global governance is not ‘governance without governments,’ it is bringing states together to work to manage global affairs. What has changed is simply which states and how many states can work together to make important collective decisions for the world.”

What is important to realize is that even in states often working together to make collective decisions on public affairs, they too sometimes succeed and fail, be it by bilateral or multilateral relations, although all told, it is based on “enlightened self-interest” (Bradford and Lim 2011, 60).

The relevance and rationale of this additional reference to the conceptual analytics of the five main works reviewed here are simply for enrichment. It most clearly situates where the path of global politics leads in a way that somehow sees what global governance structures are relevant for local actors, an insight taken from Dirk Messner on his theory of the role of regions in the world economy.

Still, this reviewer will limit to the more important points the role of the G20, largely on the notion of Bradford and Lim’s “optimal scenario.” The question that may have to be raised is whether or not a global policy framework could be built that can maximize the benefits of international collective action and put the

global economy on the path to stronger and more sustainable and balanced growth, which requires both economic and political aspects (Bradford and Lim 2011, 138). Suffice to say that the G20 really has the potential role to rebalance the world economy.

As scholars say, the G20 is the world's premier forum for international economic cooperation and the global economy's steering committee, as it were. Thus in the larger context of world politics, new world order, globalization, or even un-centralization, it cannot be denied that the G20 plays a central role as the world's economic leaders.

Given a largely centralizing global developmental agenda, we probably have to take differing approaches when comparing the G20 with the G8 as each will have a different developmental menu. Be that as it may, the G20 has become an effective mechanism in the global scene, at least in so far as regional dynamics is understood.

Thus, weaving this notion of the regional power of the G20 into the whole conception of an emerging new world order, it is clear that countries, continents, or regions do play a part in global affairs.

If one has to adequately argue the notion of choice as a possibly unifying factor between and amongst nation-states, and that, in fact, a state decides on its own given certain policy options in the face of a shared global political crisis, then one has to borrow from Bradford and Lim (2011, 59-60) who argue that the "G20 summits were born in the turbulent days of the global financial crisis in the era of globalization and that no single state, even the most powerful one, can deal with major global challenges like the financial crisis of 2008 by itself. It also means that the existing global governance bodies, like the UN, the World Bank and the G8, do not have sufficient capacity to do so either."

This presupposes that each leader faces very different domestic constraints and, on this basis, certain decisions are made given available policy choices. The case of China was given as an example—even if leaders share the same concerns on global issues and agree on the causes, the solutions that they propose and therefore the choices that they make are very different. But this does not necessarily imply any shade of isolationist policies. Admittedly, however, enlightened self-interest alone can guide the politico-economic compass to its own true direction.

This review ends with insights from yet another book, *Managing the China Challenge: How to Achieve Corporate Success in the People's Republic* by Kenneth G. Lieberthal. This work only telescopes, if we may call it that, the China market so it is limited as a navigational tool to intersections of political development, public administration, modernization, and globalization.

As reviewers or readers of Lieberthal's work are saying, the book is an authoritative view of China's political economy and decision-making process, questions that are of interest to companies operating in that country. Suffice to state that "companies will need to understand the fundamentals of the Chinese system and make major adaptations to succeed in that environment" (Lieberthal, 2011, 112). This simply means that foreign companies must master "China's political and economic systems and the priorities of local and national leaders to illuminate the strategies' they want to employ for success. The gist of author Lieberthal's book is how to do business with China.

It is hoped that this review essay exhaustively and somehow substantively surveyed the global landscape in terms of the workings of world politics; some points of convergences or divergences in terms of the relations that bind states or regions; the spectre of a global capitalist system as a new world order and the corresponding defenses of ideological democracies; and the whole matter of choices that could come into play vis-à-vis the constraints and challenges that go with globalization of such unprecedented scale.

In no time, there will be newer developments in the field. Today's perspectives will be challenged to give way to emerging worldviews. Certain world problematiques become effective triggers to test new ideological frontiers, and the next tsunami of policy futures are all worth awaiting for.

The two additional materials injected into this review are intended to open more areas for future research that will exemplify the impact of global politics upon governments, and what a particular government may choose to do to manage its own impact globally. They serve to broaden perspectives on the issues (i.e., global politics, choice, un-centralization) that the five main works have placed into the theoretical architecture of global politics or new world order.

Global politics is, therefore, examined theoretically in either mode (i.e., un-centralizing or centralizing). It is to be taken as akin to the notion of “governance is without government.” In this case, un-centralizing, or its antonym (centralizing), is seen as a function of global politics. It is hoped that the reviewed materials cast upon us a hundred points of light on the relatively high degree of un-centralization shaping up in the global stage.

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