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Why did it take so long? Trump-Bannonism in a global conjunctural frame

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ABSTRACT

This is a revised and extended version of my keynote lecture to the Vega Symposium on Resurgent Nationalisms and Populist Politics in the Neoliberal Age, held at the Swedish Academy of Sciences, Stockholm, in April 2018. It is part of a Special Issue of Geografiska Annaler, Series B that also includes my Introduction, and articles by Manu Goswami, Tova Höjdestrand and Kanishka Goonewardena, based on their contributions to the Symposium. In this essay I bring South Africa, India and the United States into the same global frame to comprehend the rise of exclusionary nationalisms and rightwing populist politics in relation to neoliberal forms of capitalism and modalities of rule. Rather than pre-given bounded national units or separate 'cases', I regard them as related yet historically specific nodes in globally interconnected historical geographies, and focus as well on new forms of U.S. imperialism since the 1980s. This global frame enables new and different questions. Instead of asking what explains Trumpism (or Trump-Bannonism), the guestion rather is why did it take so long for a demagogic figure like Trump to ascend to power, given the long histories of racism and right-wing Christian nationalism in the United States; the ravages of neoliberal forms of capitalism; and abandonment of the working class by the Democratic Party? To engage this guestion, I combine my earlier work on relational comparison with Antonio Gramsci's method of conjunctural analysis.

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Introduction

The neoliberal counter-revolution & the rise of the right

On 19 November 2016, with the world still reeling from the shock of the Trump election, *The Economist* published an issue entitled 'The New Nationalism' with a cover illustration by David Parkins that vividly captured the spirit of the time.

It captured as well the thrust of the text, framed in now-familiar terms that counter-pose globalization (understood as cosmopolitan, liberal, and progressive) against a dangerous, demagogic 'new nationalism' and right-wing populist politics. As in large swathes of other liberal commentary at the time, Trump, Brexit/Farage, Putin and le Pen appear as rude and unprecedented interruptions of neoliberal globalization from the outside – simultaneously recent and backward-looking assaults on the civilized world, that seemingly leapt up out of nowhere to catch everyone by surprise. 'For the first time since the second world war' *The Economist* declared in the New Nationalism issue, 'the great and rising powers are simultaneously in thrall to various sorts of chauvinism'.¹

In the years since then, this set of representations has proven remarkably enduring. Euro-America remains the focus of the vast bulk of writing on resurgent nationalisms, populist politics, and the rise of the right. At the same time, much mainstream commentary and analysis continues to view Trumpism (more usefully understood as Trump-Bannonism I argue later) and its European counterparts as novel and aberrant excrescences on the body of liberal democracy – or a 'basket of deplorables', as Hillary Clinton put it in her priceless rhetorical gift to Donald Trump shortly before the 2016 election.² From this perspective, the key debate is whether 'culture' (read racism/xenophobia) or 'economics' is driving right-wing populism in order to find 'the appropriate remedy' to treat and remove it.³

Contesting this view of a readily treatable acute condition, some analysts are arguing that the pathology is to be found deep in the inner workings of neoliberalism. Opinions differ widely, though, on the nature of the neoliberal body, the diagnosis of the disease, and the forces that have produced it – let alone what, if any, action can be taken to fight it.⁴ One widespread view is that the problem lies in 'the protracted failure, both in design and delivery, of "progressive neoliberalism" on each side of the Atlantic' (Peck and Theodore 2019, 258). Take, for example, influential formulations by Chantal Mouffe (2018) and Nancy Fraser (2017, 2019). In distinctive though related ways, both see the rise of the right in Europe and the U.S. respectively as first and foremost a reaction to the crisis of 'neoliberal hegemony' of the centre right and centre left following the 2008 financial crisis (Mouffe 2018) or 'progressive neoliberalism' under Clinton and Obama (Fraser 2017, 2019). Following from these analyses, both propose electoral defeat of the right through a politics of left populism (Mouffe 2018) or progressive populism (Fraser 2017, 2019). In other words, they see the rise of the right as a senile disorder of late neoliberalism that calls for a dose of good electoral politics to steer it in a more progressive direction.

Other observers of the Euro-American scene such as Dardot and Laval (2019) and Revelli (2019) are far less sanguine, declaring in effect the death of democracy at the hands of a murderously deranged neoliberalism. Chief among them is Wendy Brown (2019), who offers a bleak genealogical diagnosis of the mutation of neoliberalism in 'the West' into a ghastly Frankensteinian monster, genetically hardwired to ride roughshod over democracy and destroy it entirely. The blame for this monstrosity she lays at the feet of its progenitor, Friedrich von Hayek, whose project of combining markets with traditional morality paved the way for its emergence – albeit unintended.

Along with other contributors to this Special Issue, I strongly support and endorse the imperative for immanent critique that goes beyond standard (neo)liberal rejections of right-wing nationalisms and populist politics. Yet I also want to mark some clear differences with the lines of analysis exemplified by both Mouffe/Fraser and Brown. Promotions of left populism by Mouffe and Fraser radically underestimate the analytical and political challenges of the current conjuncture.⁵ In contrast,

while forcing us to confront the profound dangers we are living through, Brown's analysis tilts in the other direction by offering what one might call pessimism of the intellect all the way down. We urgently need deeper spatio-historical understandings – not just to explain the multiple forces driving right-wing nationalisms and populist politics, but also to shed light on the slippages, openings, and contradictions where pressure might be applied, as well as connections and alliances from which new possibilities might emerge. Even if the current crop of demagogic leaders were to disappear from the scene, the multiple forces that propelled them to power and that they are helping to amplify are unlikely to disappear any time soon.

Rather than trying to find a middle path, my task here is to suggest a distinctively different analytical and political frame for comprehending the relationships of the rise of the right to neoliberal forms of capitalism and hegemony. Most immediately, instead of focusing on Euro-America or 'the West' I underscore the imperative for a global frame of analysis, which in this essay brings South Africa, India and the United States into the same frame in mutually illuminating ways. This frame entails seeing them *not* as pre-given bounded national units or separate 'cases', but rather as variously connected yet historically specific nodes in globally interconnected historical geographies – and as sites in the *production* of global processes, rather than just passive recipients of them. It has grown out of my earlier efforts to comprehend how and why escalating popular discontent in post-apartheid South Africa from the early 2000s took the form of proliferating expressions of nationalism and populist politics that propelled Jacob Zuma to the presidency of the African National Congress (ANC) in 2007, followed in 2008 by violent xenophobic attacks – along with recognition that these processes cannot be understood only in a national frame, and the increasingly urgent need for critical comparative analysis.

The global frame I am proposing calls sharply into question stereotyped and dichotomous understandings of neoliberalism as having been violently imposed in the global South, in contrast to what some see as its more subtle propagation in the Euro-Atlantic region. Part of what makes South Africa and India directly salient to contemporary debates is that both have been heralded as icons of secular liberal democracy – India post-1947 and South Africa post-1994. In addition, unlike those parts of the non-Western world subjected to structural adjustment, neoliberal projects only took hold in the early 1990s, driven in part by fractions of domestic capital seeking to open up the economy, as well as by amplifying popular mobilizations over the 1980s. Together they offer significant insights into the multi-layered processes through which neoliberal forms of capitalism and hegemony have become associated with the erosion of secular liberal democracy and the generation of exclusionary nationalisms and populist politics.

From this perspective, the rise of right-wing nationalisms and populist politics in Euro-America was not a surprise; we have been watching these processes in many regions of the non-Western world since the end of the Cold War, but also well before that as Kanishka Goonewardena's article on Sri Lanka in this Special Issue makes clear. The point here is *not* that the Global North has been converging on the Global South since the political upheavals of 2015/16 and/or the economic crisis of 2008, but that the forces at play in different regions of the world and national formations – including Euro-America – need to be located within a global frame in relation to one another, and to specific forms of imperialism.

Situating the U.S. in this global frame enables new and different questions. Instead of asking what explains Trumpism (or Trump-Bannonism), the question rather is *why did it take so long for a demagogic figure like Trump to ascend to power, given the long histories of racism and right-wing Christian nationalism in the United States; the ravages of neoliberal forms of capitalism; and abandonment of the working class by the Democratic Party*? This question has also been informed in part by those who maintain that, far from a recent reaction or an aberration, the forces that propelled Trump into office have long, deep roots in the history of U.S. settler colonialism, slavery, and racial capitalism.⁶ Yet the question remains of why it took so long – especially in light of this history, as well as capture of state power by populist forces in other regions of the world (including India and South Africa).

Outline of a global conjunctural frame

To engage this question, I bring key forces in South Africa, India, and the U.S. into the same frame by combining relational comparison (Hart 2002, 2006, 2018) with Antonio Gramsci's spatio-historical method of conjunctural analysis.⁷ The framework is organized around a set of key **global conjunctural moments** – in other words, major turning points when interconnected forces at play at multiple levels and spatial scales in different regions of the world have come together to create new conditions with worldwide implications and reverberations.⁸ One such moment was the end of the Cold War, and the widely presumed and celebrated global triumph of neoliberal capitalism combined with secular liberal democracy. To understand why, instead, we have witnessed resurgent nationalisms, racisms, and populist politics in many regions, we have to go back to earlier global conjunctural moments – most immediately, as we shall see, the late 1940s and the late 1960s/early 70s, but also the *longue durée* processes of racial capitalism, settler colonialism, and imperialism (outlined in Part 1 of this essay) through which South Africa, India and the US were formed as nation-states.

Questions of imperialism remain vitally important in the present. In Part 2 I call attention to the emergence of new forms of U.S. imperialism in the 1980s, driven by reconfigurations of U.S. financial and military power that fundamentally transformed its relations with different regions of the non-Western world – shaped in part by specific and widely varied dynamics within those regions. These transformations of imperialism, I will argue, have meant that changing forms of neoliberalism in the U.S. since Reagan are distinctively different from anywhere else in the world – and are a crucial part of understanding the appearance of Trumpism, as well key dynamics in South Africa and India before and after the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s.

In addition to transformations of imperialism in the post-second world war era, Part 2 brings into the framework projects and processes of **bourgeois hegemony** in capitalist societies – understood not simply as consent, but as processes of contention and struggle, in which 'the words, images, symbols, forms, organizations, institutions and movements used by subordinate populations to talk about, understand, confront, accommodate themselves to, or resist their domination are shaped by the process of domination itself' (Roseberry 1994, 361). This understanding simultaneously compels attention to praxis in the domain of **everyday life**, with hegemony mediating between key global forces and everyday life.⁹ Multiple, conflicting articulations of 'the nation' and nationalism are always integral to bourgeois hegemony – bearing in mind Aijaz Ahmad's injunction that

the "nation" is not a thing which, once made, simply endures; ... "nation", like class, is a process which is made and re-made a thousand times over, and, more than process, "nation" is a terrain of struggle which condenses all social struggles, so that every organised force in society attempts to endow it with specific meanings and attributes. (Ahmad 2000, 145; emphasis in original)

Throughout this essay, I will focus on multiple, changing articulations of nationalism in relation to historically-specific dynamics of capitalist accumulation and class processes; and underscore articulations of race, gender, sexuality, caste and religion as inseparably and actively constitutive of *both* class processes and nationalisms, and their interconnections.¹⁰

Setting this framework in motion to engage contemporary challenges requires, as mentioned earlier, going back to two earlier global conjunctural moments since the end of second world war, in turn the products of much longer historical processes:

- (1) The late 1940s and the emergence of what I am calling Cold War Era (CWE) national projects of accumulation and hegemony – broadly speaking various forms of social democracy/welfare state in Euro-America; projects of Development in non-Communist countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East; ¹¹ and including, I will argue, Apartheid in South Africa.
- (2) The late 1960s/early 70s when these CWE projects came under intense and growing pressure from multiple sources, giving way to new forms of finance capital as well as neoliberal projects and processes of hegemony, although in spatio-temporally uneven ways.

Tracing the emergence of 'neoliberalism' broadly conceived from the historically specific wreckages of CWE projects sheds light on authoritarian tendencies integral to the neoliberal counter-revolution. It helps us focus as well on the intense contradictions of neoliberal forms of hegemony that far exceed the failures of 'progressive' (or roll-out) neoliberalism, as in Peck and Tickell's (2002) well-known formulation of the shift from 'roll-back' to 'roll-out' neoliberalism. In my work in South Africa, I found it more useful to distinguish two distinctively different forms of neoliberal hegemony:¹² a more liberal, technocratic, 'Third Way' form (exemplified by Thabo Mbeki) that seeks to neutralize popular antagonisms in the arenas of everyday life, as opposed to a populist form (exemplified by Jacob Zuma) that seeks to *develop* these antagonisms, typically through racially and ethnically charged articulations of nationalism, while also trying to contain them - which accounts in part for neoliberalism's authoritarian tendencies (Hart 2014). Reflecting tensions within the ruling bloc broadly defined, these distinctively different bourgeois hegemonic projects operate in relation to one another in a way that tends to amplify such antagonisms, helping to account for the warring tendencies generated through the workings of neoliberal political economy.¹³ Extending this analysis, I will show how the specific but interconnected processes through which CWE hegemonic projects unravelled in South Africa and India (Part 3) and the U.S. (Part 4) - always in relation to changing global conditions and playing out in the realms of everyday life - are crucial to understanding the intensification of exclusionary forms of nationalism and right-wing populist politics in the post-Cold War era. In the concluding section, I suggest some political stakes of this global conjunctural frame.

An important caveat, though, before I begin: this essay is a prolegomenon to a book I am in the process of writing, and of necessity I have had to present large bodies of theory and history in very broad brushstrokes.¹⁴

(1) Global Conjunctures I: Settler Colonialism, British Imperialism, and Processes of Nation Formation

My task here is to outline processes of nation formation South Africa, India and the U.S. in relation to one another in key **global conjunctures**. I begin by seeing both South Africa and the U.S. as settler colonial societies that emerged from the same global conjuncture in the mid-seventeenth century, and were formed as nations through parallel though distinctive forms of racialized dispossession, war with indigenous populations, resource extraction, and coercive labour relations. I then move to seeing both South Africa and India as key outposts of the British Empire in the age of imperialism (1875–1914) that made British imperialism possible and decisively shaped processes of nation formation.

Through analytical lenses provided by Giovanni Arrighi, the territorial entities that became South Africa and the United States can be seen as products of the declining power of Dutch world hegemony from the mid-seventeenth century, as England and France 'attempted to internalize within their own domains the networks of trade and power of the United Provinces [the Netherlands]', and struggled for control over the Atlantic until England/Britain triumphed as a world hegemonic power at the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 (Arrighi 1994, 48–49).¹⁵ For Arrighi, the new synthesis of capitalism and territorialism brought into being by French and British mercantilism in the eighteenth century combined three interrelated (as well as inherently racialized) components: settler colonialism, capitalist slavery and economic nationalism, that together 'brought to perfection on a greatly enlarged scale the practice of making wars pay for themselves' (1994, 50–51).

Both the U.S. and South Africa took shape as settler colonial nation-states through intensified wars of dispossession and territorial expansion over the course of the nineteenth century:

American historians who speak complacently of the absence of the settler-type colonialism characteristic of the European powers merely conceal the fact that the whole *internal* history of United States imperialism was one vast process of territorial seizure and occupation. The absence of territorialism 'abroad' was founded on an unprecedented territorialism 'at home'. (Stedman Jones 1972, 216–217)

In other words, the U.S. should be seen as the spatial product of a long process of dispossession and occupation that 'internalized' imperialism from the very beginning of its history (Arrighi 2007, 247). Central to this process of nation formation was the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804) that propelled the single largest chunk of territorial expansion of the U.S. in the form of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803.¹⁶ The Haitian Revolution was likewise the driving force behind Latin American national independence movements led by creole landowners fearing uprisings by slaves and indigenous groups – with close analogies to Boer nationalism a century later, as Anderson ([1983] 2006, 48) points out.

That Afrikaner (or Boer) nationalism remains alive and well in the present became vividly evident in 2007, when *De la Rey* – an ode to a Boer general in the Anglo-Boer (or South African) War (1899–1902) – became the most popular music video ever in South Africa.¹⁷ Depicting the brutality of British troops (the *khakies*) and the suffering of Boer women and children interned in concentration camps, the refrain in Afrikaans calls on General De la Rey to come and save the Boers (presumably from their alleged marginalization in post-apartheid South Africa).¹⁸

As the pre-eminent British military offensive during what Karl Polanyi ([1944] 2001) called the Hundred Years Peace (1815–1914), the Anglo-Boer War was propelled in the first instance by the discovery in the 1880s of the richest gold deposits in the world. From this perspective, both colonial India and the territory that became South Africa can be seen as interconnected outposts of the British Empire that were vitally important to its existence. Together they underwrote Britain's capacity to exercise global political-economic leadership/dominance through the operations of the gold standard in the face of intensifying challenges in the period leading up to the first world war. At the same time, anti-colonial movements in South Africa and India were linked through the ambiguous figure of Gandhi.¹⁹

Of great importance as well is Goswami's (2002) fundamental reconstruction of Benedict Anderson's ([1983] 2006) theory of the modular nation form. Challenging Anderson's claim of the linear diffusion of nationalist models from Euro-America to Asia and Africa, Goswami maintains that the modular nation form 'was the structural and discursive counterpart to the changes initiated by the deepening, widening, and intensification of multi-scalar and multi-temporal processes of global capitalist and colonial restructuring' (2002, 786) – and that the age of high imperialism was *simultaneously* the age of both intensified Euro-American nationalisms and anti-colonial nationalisms.²⁰

Anti-colonial movements and nationalisms in the first part of the twentieth century intensified in tandem with settler colonial 'strategies of exclusion, deportation and segregation, in particular, the deployment of those state-based instruments of surveillance, the census, the passport and the literacy test' in what Lake and Reynolds in *Drawing the Global Colour Line* (2008) call white men's countries – the British Dominions and the west coast of the U.S.. They cite the American Ku Klux Klansman Lothrop Stoddard writing in 1923: 'Nothing was more striking than the instinctive and instantaneous solidarity which binds together Australians and Afrikanders [*sic*], Californians and Canadians, into a "sacred Union" at the mere whisper of Asiatic immigration' (2008, 3). They point as well to how the political mobilization of white men served to amplify tensions within the British Empire between self-governing 'white' Dominions and the imperial subjects of India, 'a conflict that ultimately forced British political leaders, threatened by the prospect of the U.S. assuming leadership of a new white men's alliance, to "come out" as it were, as "white" – and help defeat Japan's bid to have a racial equality clause included in the Covenant of the League of Nations' (2008, 11).

The intensification of *both* right-wing nationalisms *and* proliferating anti-colonial struggles in many regions of the world in the inter-war years also needs to be situated in relation to the Russian Revolution. Taking inspiration from Italian fascism and then Nazism, the rise of right-wing Hindu nationalism (Hindutva) from the mid-1920s combined blood-and soil nationalism, mythologies of Muslim tyranny, and

anxieties among large sections of the upper caste elites as they were pressed by the upsurge of lower castes from one side and the rise of a multi-religious, multi-caste nationalism that was fast becoming a veritable mass movement with Gandhi's shepherding of the Congress, especially after 1919. (Ahmad 2015, 182)

These Indian dynamics help point us to related but distinctive processes in South Africa and the U.S. in the interwar period that I will discuss in far greater detail in the book – including the formation of strongly anti-secular Protestant fundamentalisms as active political forces in the 1920s and 1930s, parallel with Hindutva.

More generally, as I now try to show, the *longue durée* processes of nation formation sketched out in this discussion are crucial to understanding both the post-second world war global conjuncture of the late 1940s, and the related though distinct dynamics in each national setting.

(2) Global Conjunctures II: Cold War Era Projects of Hegemony and the Shifting Contours of U.S. Imperialism

Let me shift now to the late 1940s, focusing on projects and processes of hegemony. This was of course the moment of the consolidation of U.S. imperialism; the start of the Cold War; decolonization in much of Asia, but colonial powers trying to hang on in most of Africa; and the Bretton Woods Regime of relatively stable exchange rates and restrictions on financial movements across national borders. It also marked the inauguration of what I am calling Cold War Era (CWE) projects of capitalist accumulation, bourgeois hegemony and related articulations of nationalism – broadly speaking, various forms of Keynesian social democracy in Euro-America and Development in non-socialist countries of the 'Third World'.²¹

From this perspective, South African Apartheid (set in place in 1948) appears as an extreme but not exceptional member of a family of Cold War Era projects that include Jawaharlal Nehru's project of Development, secular democracy and non-alignment (or the Nehruvian Consensus); and the consolidation of Fordism in the US. All three were preceded by significant popular uprisings: militant labour movements in South Africa in the 1940s; ongoing anti-colonial nationalist movements in India that culminated in independence in 1947; and in the U.S., as Nikhil Pal Singh (2004, 7) mentions, black activists during the second world war 'drew strong links between fascism, colonialism, and U.S. racial segregation'. These processes and projects were also deeply rooted in the powerful social antagonisms of the inter-war period. In distinctively different ways, CWE projects mobilized nationalist sentiment and (neo)Keynesian forms of state intervention aimed at containing insurgent subaltern forces.²²

Through the lens of CWE projects, Apartheid can be seen as a project of racialized partition that went beyond segregation to delineate a white South African nation-state, in which black South Africans were defined as non-citizens who belonged in ethnically demarcated Bantustan 'nations'. One can also see how, for all its distinctiveness, Apartheid resonated with the violent partitioning along lines of religion through which British colonial authorities delineated India and Pakistan as nation-states in 1947. With the onset of the Cold War, U.S. officials recognized white supremacy as the 'Achilles heel' of U.S. foreign relations, and that 'the stability of the expanded American realm of action in the world was linked to the resolution of the crisis of racial discord and division at home' (Singh 2004, 7). Yet

even as an officially sanctioned apartheid was being dismantled ... new structures of racial inequality rooted in a national racial geography of urban ghettoes and suburban idylls, and intractable disparities of black and white wealth and employment were being established. (Singh 2004)²³

Part of what distinguished Apartheid from the (at least nominally) secular liberalism of the Nehruvian Consensus and Fordism was Verwoerd's vision of it as the divine mission of Afrikanerdom, along with justification of racial exploitation and oppression through biblical invocations – allowing us see white Christian nationalism in South Africa as a precursor to its U.S. counterpart that took hold in a later conjuncture.

By the late 1960s, CWE projects in many regions of the world were coming under intense pressure. In later sections of this essay, I will trace how the specific processes through which CWE projects unravelled in South Africa, India and the U.S. are crucial to understanding resurgent nationalisms and populist politics in relation to neoliberal forms of capitalism in the post-Cold War

era. These processes of unravelling can be seen in terms of the intensifying contradictions generated by how CWE projects of hegemony played out in practice – and require close attention to forces operating at the level of everyday life.

These processes also need to be situated in relation to key global conjunctural forces. First, they exemplify the rise of what Arrighi, Hopkins, and Wallerstein (1989) called anti-systemic movements from the late 1960s – not just in Paris, Chicago and Hungary, but all over the non-Western World – that Michael Watts vividly captures in his essay '1968 and all that' (2001):²⁴

Sixty-eight was unequivocally global and regional yet it was necessarily, and irreducibly, local too. A number of commentators have noted national differences but the fact remains that in an array of locations – from Prague to Peking, from Cairo to Cape Town, from Berkeley to Berlin – each movement possessed a distinctive *local* identity within in the circumference of a global wave of New Left protest. (Watts 2001, 172).

This worldwide upsurge in popular antagonisms was followed by the collapse of the Bretton Woods Regime in 1971 when the Nixon administration delinked the dollar from a fixed price of gold – as well as by intensifying global capitalist crisis over the 1970s, especially following the 1973 OPEC oil price rise. This was, in short,

a time when increased inter-capitalist competition, rampant inflation, falling rates of profit and spreading speculation against the dollar were conjoined with a worldwide upsurge against American imperialism, while the core capitalist countries themselves were shaken not only by waves of industrial militancy, but by the eruption of youth and black protests in the streets, as the war in Indochina became a US disaster. (Panitch 2000, 10)

The early 1970s was also the moment when a group of non-aligned countries proposed the New International Economic Order (NIEO) demanding greater control over multinational corporations operating in their territories; freedom to set up associations of primary commodity producers similar to OPEC; and demands for 'equitable and remunerative' prices for raw materials. The defeat of the NIEO, as Manu Goswami (this volume) points out, was a key condition of possibility for making neoliberalism a global form; and the eruption of the Latin American debt crisis in 1982, triggered by sharply increasing interest rates in the U.S., dealt the death blow to ambitions for global redistribution envisaged by the NIEO.²⁵

Another hugely important worldwide process was the resurgence of fundamentalist religious movements with roots earlier in the twentieth century and their growing involvement in politics in the chaotic 1970s. The seemingly secure separation between the realms of politics and religion in the years immediately following the end of second world war in many regions of the world went into sharp reverse around 1975, Gilles Kepel (1994, 2) points out, as a 'new religious approach took shape, aimed no longer at adapting to secular values, but at recovering a sacred foundation for the organization of society – by changing society if necessary.' Led by the rise of Political Islam this burgeoning movement was extraordinarily widespread, stretching from 'Cairo to Algiers to Prague, from the American Evangelicals to the zealots of Gush Emunim, from Islamic militants to Catholic charismatics, from the Lubavitch to Communion and Liberation'. The mid-1970s also marks the political resurgence of the forces of Hindutva in the context of Indira Gandhi's 'Declaration of Emergency' – a key moment in the disintegration of the Nehruvian Consensus, as we shall see.

By far the most common interpretation of the collapse of the Bretton Woods Regime, the 1973 OPEC oil price rise, and the defeat of the U.S. in Vietnam in 1975, is that together they represent the decline of U.S. hegemonic power, the weakening of the nation state, and the slide into a chaotic non-system driven by inexorable technological and market forces culminating in full-blown neoliberal globalization. My own position is aligned with those who argue that the shift to what Peter Gowan (1999) called the Dollar Wall Street Regime – fluctuating exchange rates, lifting restrictions on financial movements, and the rise of new forms of finance capital – represented not a weakening of U.S. global power, but rather its strengthening through the dominance of the dollar that in turn rests on U.S. military-political power. Also of great significance is Mahmood Mamdani's work on the coincidence of the U.S. defeat in Vietnam with the fall of the Portuguese empire – and the shift in the

centre of gravity of the Cold War from Southeast Asia to southern Africa, central Asia, the Middle East and Central America in the form of Proxy Wars under Reagan in which the Christian Right played a major role, as we shall see in Section 4.²⁶

More broadly I suggest that the early 1980s signalled the emergence of new forms of US imperialism marked by significant shifts in the interconnected financial and military relations of the US to different regions of the non-Western world. ²⁷ One can discern three very broad regional patterns of financial reconfiguration – closely linked to the neoliberal counter-revolution but not reducible to it – all of which generated massive capital inflows into the US from the 1980s that helped drive intensified militarism under Reagan: (1) the rise of China as a major exporter of cheap consumer goods, and purchaser of U.S. Treasury Bonds;²⁸ (2) the growing interconnections between petroleum and armament corporations following the OPEC oil price rise that fed into energy conflicts in the Middle East;²⁹ and (3) the debt crisis of the early 1980s in many Latin American and African countries led to the imposition of stabilization and structural adjustment policies including the opening up of capital markets that propelled huge outflows of capital – much of which landed up on Wall Street. We shall return in Section 4 to a fuller discussion of the forces within the U.S. that helped drive these processes, and their direct connection with the 9/11 attacks and the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

India and South Africa were not incorporated into any of these broad regional realignments with the U.S. for reasons having to do with their very different relations to the Soviet Union. Non-alignment was a key element of the Nehruvian Consensus, although following India's defeat in the war with China in 1962 the Nehru regime moved into a closer relationship with the Soviet Union. For Euro-America, South Africa operated as a bulwark against communism in Africa – and was a major player in the Proxy Wars of the 1980s. Together, however, South Africa and India let us see CWE projects of hegemony falling apart in slow motion over the 1980s, setting the conditions for the 1990s and beyond, when neoliberal forms of capitalism and hegemony came into relation with intensified articulations of nationalism to generate populist politics – albeit in dramatically different ways.

(3) Connecting Neoliberalism, Resurgent Nationalisms & Populist Politics: The Erosion of Cold War Era Projects in South Africa and India

In a necessarily very schematic way, this section traces three parallel but distinctive processes of erosion of Apartheid and the Nehruvian Consensus that emerged in the late 1960s/early 1970s and gathered force over the 1980s:

- (a) From the early 1970s both South Africa and India saw intensifying popular mobilizations around class, race, and caste oppression in the arenas of everyday life;
- (b) By the early 1980s, both the ANC in exile and the forces of Hindutva were pursuing alternative hegemonic projects that challenged Apartheid and the Nehruvian consensus respectively by engaging these escalating popular antagonisms through articulations of nationalism; and
- (c) By the mid-1980s, important fractions of capital in both countries were trying to get out and applying growing pressure to Apartheid and the Nehruvian consensus.

Together, these processes of erosion paved the way for the coincidence of neoliberal capitalism, amplifying nationalisms, and the generation of populist politics from the early 1990s with the end of the Cold War – although through distinctively different forms, dynamics, and temporalities. Let me turn now to expand briefly on each of these points.

Some observers trace the beginnings of the erosion of the Nehruvian Consensus to India's defeat in the war with China in 1962 (e.g. Kothari 1969). Nehru's death in 1964 was followed by a major food crisis, the suspension of five-year planning, and intense battles in the Indian National Congress Party that brought his daughter Indira Gandhi to power in 1966.³⁰ A year later the Maoist Naxalite movement erupted in a village in West Bengal, 'where a group of revolutionaries – who repudiated the approaches of the major communist parties as "reformist" – launched an armed uprising of peasants against local landlords' (Harriss 2010, 8). The movement spread quickly through other regions of Northeast India, but 'met with matching violence by the state and it appeared to have been very largely overcome, even before Mrs Indira Gandhi's Emergency [1975–77] stifled opposition' (2010, 9).³¹

A response to 'the outbreak of massive, right-wing populist agitation in the mid-1970s', the Emergency marked a crucial turning point: fierce opposition to the Emergency and Indira Gandhi's dictatorial tendencies 'served to legitimize the RSS (Hindutva) as a respectable force in Indian politics and to confer on its political front a significant place in government for the first time in Indian history' (Ahmad 2015, 187).³² This was also, very significantly, the moment of resurgence of fundamentalist forms of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism seeking to break down secular divisions in many regions of the world (Kepel 1994).

The lifting of the Emergency in 1977 following the electoral victory of the Janata Party over Congress unleashed a 'veritable explosion of long accumulated democratic aspirations' including labour and student movements, as well as widespread rural uprisings that brought a large number of peasants/farmers into parliament (Menon and Nigam 2007, 6).³³ A key figure in the formation of what came to be called the Farmers' Movements was Charan Singh. As Partha Chatterjee wrote in 1977,

From rich farmers to subsistence peasants, owners of agricultural land are being told: make your demands to the government for grants, for subsidies, for appropriate laws, and the labour that you have put into your lands from time immemorial will at last be justly rewarded: soon everyone will get rich.³⁴

Underscoring the importance of caste, Menon and Nigam (2007, 7) maintain that 'this was not simply a rural versus urban divide: condensed into this assertion of "the rural" were also the aspirations of an emergent vernacular elite that was at the same time predominantly lower- and middle-caste'. Brought to an end by Indira Gandhi's return to power in January 1980, the Janata period signalled the coincidence of the rise of new class and caste forces along with the 'arrival' of the Hindu nationalist right (at least in the limited sense that it participated in government for the first time) (Corbridge and Harriss 2000, 92).

The decade from the late 1960s was also when Apartheid came under growing pressure from mounting popular antagonisms that took two major forms. First, after decades of labour repression, a volcanic wave of militant strikes erupted in the Durban docks in October 1971 and spread to factories throughout the country.³⁵ Second was the formation of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) under the leadership of Steve Biko in the second half of the 1960s, linked in turn with the Soweto uprising on 16 June 1976 when a peaceful march of school children protesting the imposition of Afrikaans in black schools met with horrendous police brutality, killing hundreds of students and injuring thousands more. Student struggle quickly spread to other townships throughout South Africa, and the murder of Biko in prison in September 1977 further inflamed popular anger.³⁶ By the late 1970s the regime of P.W. Botha embarked on a series of 'reforms' in a desperate effort to contain popular discontent – leading Saul and Gelb ([1981] 1986) to argue that this 'formative action' by the apartheid state and capital would run aground because its co-optation was far too limited and exclusionary to pre-empt the demands of the mass of the population, and instead opened new spaces for political organizing.

In short: by the start of the 1980s both the Nehruvian Consensus and Apartheid were teetering but still intact. Propelled by forces generated in the realms of everyday life, key processes that unfolded over the 1980s are crucial to understanding their joint demise, as well as how neoliberal capitalism and escalating expressions of nationalism came together following the end of the Cold War. Most importantly these processes entailed efforts to construct an alternative hegemonic project by the forces of Hindutva seeking to overturn the remnants of the Nehruvian Consensus and the Indian Congress Party; and by the African National Congress alliance in exile seeking to overturn the Apartheid state.

In India, the rise of farmers' movements in the 1970s 'paved the way for a more extensive capitalist transformation of the Indian countryside [in the 1980s] than many thought likely or even possible', Corbridge and Harriss (2000, 106) note – contributing to the bankrupting of the Congress Party and the growing power of the forces of Hindutva. In the context of deepening uncertainty and flux, especially following the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984, Achin Vanaik (2017, 67) observes that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Sangh Parivar 'were the one collective force that had the organizational means, ideological clarity and inclination to pursue the politics of sustained political mobilization.' In addition, as Aijaz Ahmad (2004, 34) points out, the main strategic strength of Hindutva lay in 'its organizational capacity simultaneously to disperse its personnel into numerous forms of activity in all walks of national life and, at strategic moments, to concentrate diverse types of personnel for particular mobilizations and spectacles'. The most spectacular and violent of these was on 6 December 1992, with the destruction of a sixteenth century mosque in the town of Ayodhya in northern India, allegedly the birthplace of the Hindu god Ram.³⁷ The event unleashed a massive wave of anti-Muslim violence across the country, and was hugely important in consolidating widespread popular support for the BJP.

Yet, as many observers have insisted, this consolidation was the product of long and deep organizing in the trenches of everyday life, in which articulations of gender, sexuality, caste, and communalism were powerful forces driving the rise of Hindutva. In the book, I will elaborate this crucial point, drawing on ethnographic studies of Hindutva organizing, including *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags* (Basu et al. 1993); the Hindu family as the training ground for Hindu masculinity (Bannerji 2011); and Mathur's (2008) illuminating ethnographic account of the rise of Hindu nationalism in Rajasthan in the early 1990s.

In South Africa, escalating struggles against racial capitalism and the apartheid state in the 1980s reflected and reinforced an intensifying crisis of accumulation. In the early 1980s, these struggles moved in sharply different directions often framed in terms of 'workerism' vs. 'populism'. The former refers the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) established in 1979 and focused on 'strong factory organisation as an expression of a truly independent working-class consciousness' (Lodge and Nasson 1991, 28) – a position strongly contested by 'community unions' for which workplace and township struggles were inseparable, and which openly identified with the African National Congress and its affiliates in exile.³⁸ In 1985 FOSATU merged with ANC-linked unions to form COSATU, the Congress of South African Trade Unions.³⁹

Another key moment was the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983 as a broad popular front of predominantly youth, student, and civic organizations. Hein Marais notes that

The formation of the UDF had occurred largely on the basis of internal dynamics and were organisationally independent of the ANC. The ANC was not able to direct resistance tactics. But its growing authority at the ideological and symbolic levels did enable it to strongly influence the overall terms in which resistance actions were couched – hence the formidable resonance of its calls for 'ungovernability' and a 'people's war'. (Marais 2011, 52).

The latter, of course, stand in sharp contrast to deep, highly disciplined organizing by the forces of Hindutva in the realms of everyday life. By late 1987, 'most of the UDF leadership was either in prison, in hiding or dead; almost 30,000 activists (70% of them members of UDF affiliates) had been arrested or detained and more than 3,000 people had been killed' (2011, 55) – and in 1988 the UDF was banned.⁴⁰

Let me touch briefly now on the third key set of processes that took hold in India and South Africa in the 1980s: in both countries, important fractions of capital were pushing to (re)connect with the global political economy – in South Africa from a relatively open economy that had been hemmed in by sanctions and the crisis of the apartheid state, and in India from an economy that had been relatively closed since the late 1940s.⁴¹ These processes enable us see how the ushering in of neoliberal capitalism by both Congress parties in the 1990s was driven not just by the IMF/World Bank, but also powerful fractions of domestic capital.⁴²

The fall of the Soviet Union was momentous for both India and South Africa, signalling at least the official collapse of the Nehruvian Consensus and Apartheid. Broadly speaking, since the early 1990s we can identify three key tendencies:

- (a) New hegemonic projects have taken shape in the face of powerful pressures both from subaltern groups and classes, and from key fractions of capital;
- (b) Neoliberal capitalism has unleashed dynamics of accumulation which, although distinctively very different, have generated further tensions;⁴³
- (c) In the face of these tensions, intensified articulations of nationalism that conjure up a glorious past are crucial to hegemonic processes – but they operate in relation to common sense understandings in the arenas of everyday life, which is why the struggles and dynamics of the 1980s and earlier remain vitally important.

Together these tendencies explain why, in both India and South Africa, neoliberal capitalism and amplifying nationalisms have gone hand in hand – although operating through dramatically different dynamics of accumulation and processes of bourgeois hegemony that I will discuss far more fully in the book. Since the late 1990s what has emerged in India is what Ahmad (2015) calls the irresistible rise of the extreme right to dominance in vast areas of culture, society, ideology and economy – further cemented (at least for the time being) by the BJP victory in the 2019 election. In contrast, South Africa exemplifies the amplifying contradictions through which historically specific forms of neoliberal capitalism, expanded democracy and proliferating nationalisms have come together.

Let me turn now to the distinction outlined in the Introduction between liberal forms of neoliberal bourgeois hegemony that seek to neutralize popular antagonisms, and populist forms that seek to mobilize these antagonisms but keep them under control. Specific articulations of nationalism are crucial to these differences. From this perspective, the key populist moment in India following the end of the Cold War was in the early 1990s, with the coming together of three key sets of forces that signalled the end of the Nehruvian consensus: (a) the 1992 destruction of the Babri Mosque and the unleashing of powerful anti-Muslim sentiment; (b) the ferocious response by upper castes to the Mandal Report (1990), making concessions to lower caste groups ('Other Backward Castes' in Indian parlance); and (c) the unilateral inauguration of 'economic liberalization' by a Congress Party government in 1991. Together these forces laid the groundwork for what appear (at least for the time being) as the mutually reinforcing dynamics of neoliberal capitalism and right-wing articulations of nationalism operating through invocations of a 'pure' Hindu people that contain popular antagonisms by deflecting them to a Muslim 'other'.

The key populist hegemonic moment in post-Apartheid South Africa came in 2007, with Jacob Zuma's triumphant seizure of power – although his appeals to 'the people' versus 'the power bloc' can be traced back at least to 2003 (Hart 2014). In the first part of 1990s, the Mandela years can be seen as the embodiment of a liberal form of neoliberal bourgeois hegemony, integral to which were articulations of the inclusive Rainbow Nation – in some ways startlingly parallel to Nehru's 1947 Gandhian vow to 'wipe every tear from every eye', but operating alongside vicious austerity and plummeting employment as the economy opened up to cheap imports from China. In response to mounting popular antagonisms, Thabo Mbeki combined a disciplinary re-articulation of nationalism with technocratic strategies to identify and treat a 'backward' segment of society starting in the early 2000s. Amplifying contradictions played directly into the rise of Zuma, whose widespread popular appeal exemplified the shift from liberal to populist forms of neoliberal hegemony - key to which was a militaristic and masculinist re-articulation of nationalism embodied in his signature song 'Bring me my machine gun'.⁴⁴ The eruption of Julius Malema's Economic Freedom Fighters in 2013 represents a more recent iteration of this dynamic of tapping into popular antagonisms. In the book, I will discuss more fully the battle underway within the ANC between the Ramaphosa and Zuma factions, including how evangelical Christianity - long a major element of Zuma's popular support – is becoming an important battleground.

For purposes of this essay, let me return now to the question posed in the Introduction: if the key populist hegemonic moment in India was 1992, and South Africa in 2007, why was it only in 2016 that a demagogic figure like Trump was able to seize state power?

(4) Why Did it Take So Long? Trumpism in a Global Conjunctural Frame

Like Apartheid and Nehruvian Development, Fordism came under intense pressure from the late 1960s, intensifying in the 1970s in the face of economic crises, the U.S. defeat in Vietnam and escalating political upheavals. Also as in India and South Africa, the decisive turn to neoliberal forms of capitalism came in the 1990s under Clinton who dismantled the welfare state and massively deregulated finance capital. From the early 1990s, Patrick Buchanan made multiple bids for the presidency on a populist platform, grounded in articulations of nationalism that hearken back to a settler colonial past. He was also tapping into resurgent right-wing nationalist movements, bringing together many fears and grievances including 'government abuse of power; fears about globalism and sovereignty; economic distress (real, relative, and anticipated); apocalyptic fears of conspiracy and tyranny from above; male identity crisis; backlash against the social liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s, and more' (Berlet and Lyons 2000, 289). Mike Davis (2017) has astutely observed that 'With the help of Breitbart and the alt right, [Donald Trump] essentially ran in Patrick Buchanan's old shoes'.⁴⁵ The key question, though, is how and why Buchanan's old shoes only gained traction in 2016?

Drawing on the global conjunctural framework developed in this essay, I suggest that the answer hinges crucially on the changing forms of U.S. imperialism – namely the combined military and financial powers reinforced in the 1980s, which reconfigured the relations of the U.S. with different regions of the non-Western world. These global interconnections in turn need to be understood in relation to forces operating in the realms of everyday life, through mediations of hegemonic processes that were thrown into chaos and crisis in the 1970s, and then transformed from the 1980s under Reagan. In summary, I propose the following key arguments:

- (a) During the chaotic 1970s, Fordism fell apart more rapidly than either Apartheid or the Nehruvian Consensus under the combined pressure of movements from the left and the right that gathered force during the 1960s; the capitalist crisis that intensified through the1970s; and mounting political crises associated with the Vietnam War, followed by revolutions in Iran and Nicaragua, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.
- (b) Reagan's accession to power in 1981 represented the dismantling of Fordist hegemony, the consolidation of a project grounded in a new right-wing coalition, and the emergence of new forms of U.S. imperialism driven both by global financial restructuring and the Proxy Wars outlined earlier in which the fiercely anti-communist Christian Right that coalesced in the 1970s (but that goes back to the 1920s) played a central role.
- (c) With the end of the Cold War, there was a sharp rupture in the right-wing coalition between the Christian Right and neo-conservatives that swept Reagan to power. Tensions within the Christian Right further undermined Patrick Buchanan's bid for state power on a populist platform.
- (d) Another key part of the answer to how resurgent right-wing populist movements were held in check is that, in the face of shrinking employment, stagnant incomes, and escalating inequality, the mass of the U.S. population was caught up in a frenzy of consumerism and spiraling debt – driven by financial deregulation under Reagan and Clinton, asset price inflation, massive foreign capital inflows that lowered the cost of debt, and enabled in crucially important ways by the tsunami of cheap consumer goods from China and Chinese purchasing of Treasury Bonds.
- (e) The 9/11 attacks part of the 'unfinished business' of the Proxy Wars of the 1980s (Mamdani 2004) took the wind out of the sails of isolationist nationalist movements like Buchanan's by unleashing waves of militant patriotism combined with Islamophobia. During the Bush II administration the Christian Right became deeply embedded in the White House.⁴⁶ In addition, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were accompanied by what Ellen Moore in *Grateful Nation* (2017) calls 'militarized common sense' through which military valorization is infused into everyday civilian life.

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(f) According to Dylan Riley, 'The crisis of the neo-liberal hegemonic formula can be dated precisely to 3 October 2008, when the \$700 billion Troubled Assets Relief Program (TARP) [the huge bailout of the banks] revealed the hypocrisy of its free-market ideology' (2017, 25). Although multiple contingencies played into Trump's election, Riley maintains, it was these 'deeper shifts in the political economy of the country [that] made it possible for Trump to emerge in a context where the existing hegemonic project seemed exhausted' (2017, 30). Drawing on the global conjunctural framework, I suggest that the 2008 financial meltdown blew the lid off U.S. neoliberal hegemony in ways that include – but extend well beyond – the hypocrisy of TARP. Most immediately, it *also* exposed the fragility of a consumer debt dynamic that is peculiar to the U.S. because of its imperial position. *In addition* this was the moment when Obama assumed power, *and* when the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan had been thoroughly discredited.

The confluence of these contradictions created a conjunctural moment in which Buchananesque articulations of racist nationalism and nativism could take root and metastasize over the Obama years – a process driven not just by Trump, but the much wider global networks of right-wing white Christian nationalism in which Stephen Bannon remains situated. Bannon can be seen as the organic intellectual of Trumpist coalition, engaged not just in helping to constitute a cross-class predominantly white movement out of mounting popular antagonisms that brought Trump to power, but also deploying white Christian nationalist ideology to powerful effect in producing a conception of the world that resonates in certain respects with Hindutva. Yet Bannon's expulsion from the White House in 2017 and from Breitbart in early 2018 speaks to the deep, profound contradictions within and through which Trumpism is playing out in practice, making it more analogous to the tension-ridden forces at work in South Africa than to the relative coherence of the right in India. In the book, I will delve into these unfolding dynamics in relation to one another in far greater detail. For purposes of the present essay my focus is on the question of why it took so long for Trump-Bannonism to burst on to the scene – and hence the seven key arguments outlined above, on which I will now briefly elaborate.

In tracing the erosion of Fordism in relation to the changing contours of U.S. imperialism, we need to recall the imperative in the early years of the Cold War for the U.S. to resolve 'the crisis of racial discord and division at home' (Singh 2004, 7) in order to uphold its global pre-eminence. Singh shows how, by the late 1960s, a standard narrative took hold according to which the civil rights era began with the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* ruling that segregation of public schools was unconstitutional, and then moved through the 1963 March on Washington, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and Lyndon Johnson's launching the War on Poverty. Then, according to this narrative, there was a sharp turn:

At this point [1965] a series of sudden, coincidental shifts are said to have occurred: from civil rights to black power; south to north; nonviolent to violent; tolerant to divisive; integrationist to black nationalist; patriotic to anti-American, all conspiring to fracture the movement, undermine political support, and create a widespread public backlash against what were now seen as excessive demands. (Singh 2004, 5)⁴⁷

This narrative of a justified reaction 'to the excesses of black radicalism wilfully ignores historically entrenched opposition to even the most moderate civil rights reforms throughout the white South and much of the urban North across the entire post-World War II period' (2004, 8). The narrative succeeded in legitimizing the withdrawal of public commitment to racial equality and 'helped to renew an age-old racist imagination' (2004, 5). It also paved the way for the colossal expansion of incarceration from the 1980s that imprisoned African American men on a vastly disproportionate scale.⁴⁸

A related and vitally important set of processes that gathered force in the second half of the1960s was the rise of conservative activists and politicians, defining themselves as authentic representatives of average white Americans, intent on harnessing 'mass resentments against federal power, left-wing

movements, the counterculture, and the black poor' (Kazin 1998, 246). These processes overlapped with the rapid escalation of politically active conservative Protestant evangelicals issuing urgent cries for a return to 'family values' – many of them animated by horror at the rise of feminism, lesbian and gay activism, and enraged by the 1973 Supreme Court decision to legalize abortion (Roe v. Wade).

In combination with powerful anti-communism, these forces played a major role in hastening the demise of Fordism and propelling Ronald Reagan into office in 1980 with cries of getting the state out of the market. Molly Worthen (2017) has observed that 'In blending their movement's libertarian inclinations with anticommunist hysteria and anxieties about cultural change, these evangelical leaders helped catalyze the most powerful ideology in modern American politics: Christian free-market mania'. Yet this was not simply a matter of interpellation from above. In *To Serve God and Walmart*, Bethany Moreton shows how the foot soldiers who drove the neoliberal counterrevolution

were Christian family women, galvanized to public action by issues like school prayer, gay liberation, and *Roe* v. *Wade*. Rather than absorbing a family-values agenda from their male pastors, conservative women themselves taught the Republican Party and the Moral Majority which issues would send them door to door in their precincts. (2009, 4)

These processes resonate with the forces of Hindutva that were actively operating in the realms of everyday life in the 1970s and 80s.

Shortly into Reagan's first term it became clear that the administration was focused on tax cuts, military spending, breaking the power of organized labour and building prisons, with relatively little attention to the Christian Right's agenda of 'family values', anti-abortion, and school prayer.⁴⁹ Ironically it was only in the 1990s with Clinton's dismantling of 'welfare as we know it' that parts of the Christian Right's 'family values' agenda were realized.⁵⁰ What kept the Christian Right tethered to Reagan was the powerful anti-communism they shared with the New Right-neoconservative alliance. Of crucial importance were the Proxy Wars, through which the centre of gravity in the late Cold War shifted to Southern Africa, Central America, and the Middle East/central Asia following the defeat of the U.S. in Vietnam – in which the Christian Right was enthusiastically and actively engaged.⁵¹

The end of the Cold War blew apart the New Right coalition. In an address to the U.S. Congress on 11 September 1990, President George H. W. Bush laid out his vision for a 'New World Order' that was about to come into being with the end of the Cold War, in which 'all the nations of the world can live in harmony'.⁵² He also issued a demand for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait. When former ally Saddam Hussein refused to comply, the US led a coalition of forces that attacked Iraq in the first Gulf War. This was also the moment when the anti-communist glue that had held together the New Right coalition of the Christian Right with neoconservatives ruptured along the lines of sharp differences between neoconservative internationalism and the latent 'America First' nationalism of self-styled paleoconservatives (Diamond 1995, 226) that came to the fore under the leadership of Patrick Buchanan.⁵³ In addition to hardening the split within the New Right, Bush I's announcement of a New World Order 'surged through the Christian and secular Hard Right like an electric shock' (Berlet and Lyons 2000, 287), generating a resurgence of white nationalism and vigilante organizing, including the rapidly growing Patriot movement and its militias.⁵⁴ It also propelled Buchanan into running against Bush in 1992.⁵⁵ Buchanan made further unsuccessful bids for the presidency in 1996 and 2000, declaring in a prescient speech to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations in 1998 that

The day is not too distant when economic nationalism will triumph. Several events will hasten that day. The first is the tidal wave of imports from Asia about to hit these shores. When all those manufactured goods pour in, taking down industries and killing jobs, there will arise a clamor from industry and labor for protection. If that cry goes unheeded, those who turn a stone face to the American workers will be turned out of power. In the Democratic Party or the Republican Party or the Reform Party or some new party, economic nationalism will find its vehicle and its voice. Rely upon it. (Cited by Berlet and Lyons 2000, 338)

The following year Buchanan left the Republican Party for the Reform Party, founded in 1995 by Ross Perot, the populist contender for the presidency in 1996 election. Deploying the nativist slogan

'America First' made popular by American fascist sympathizers in the 1930s, Buchanan ran against none another than Donald Trump in the primaries.⁵⁶ Trump dropped out of the race (but not before pocketing the slogan for later use), and Buchanan went on to resounding defeat in the 2000 election. As mentioned earlier, the 9/11 attack – itself part of the fallout of the Proxy Wars of the 1980s – and the tidal wave of militarism it called forth further undermined Buchanan's vision of isolationism and economic nationalism.

Another part of the reason why it took another 18 years for Buchanan's prophesy to be realized can be traced to burgeoning consumer spending and asset price inflation. Writing in the wake of the meltdown shortly before his death, Peter Gowan (2009) extended his analysis of the Dollar Wall Street Regime pointing to how, following the failure of efforts to revive the US industrial economy in the late 1970s and early 1980s, what emerged was a dynamic of accumulation 'driven by the new centrality of the financial sector within the structure of American capitalism' (2009, 24).⁵⁷ With the exception of the Information Technology sector in the late 1990s, 'the bulk of the American economy, on which growth depends, has been marked by stagnant or even declining incomes amongst the mass of the population and no growth motor from investment, whether public or private' (2009, 24–25). The great paradox was that, in the face of stagnant mass incomes, GDP growth increasingly came to rely on the stimulus of consumer demand (hence Bush II's urgent injunction for Americans to go shopping immediately following 9/11). The paradox was resolved through massively escalating consumer debt, asset-price and housing bubbles and, very crucially, the role of China and other Asian exporting economies that played a dual role. First,

cheap commodities could be bought on an endless basis from abroad – especially from China – since dollar dominance enabled the US to run up huge current-account deficits, as other countries allowed their exports to the US to be paid for in dollars (Gowan 2009, 25).

At the same time,

These export surpluses were recycled back into the American financial system via the purchasing of US financial assets, thus cheapening the cost of debt by massively expanding 'liquidity' within the financial system. The results of these trends can be summarized in the following figures. Aggregate US debt as a percentage of GDP rose from 163 per cent in 1980 to 346 per cent in 2007. The two sectors which account for this rise were house-hold debt and internal financial-sector debt. Household debt rose from 50 per cent of GDP in 1980 to 100 per cent of GDP in 2007 ... [W]ithin the financial sector itself [indebtedness] rose from 21 per cent of GDP in 1980 to 83 per cent in 2000 and 116 per cent in 2007. (Gowan 2009, 25–26)⁵⁸

These considerations, in combination with the points raised earlier about 'Christian free-market mania', serve to underscore the peculiarities of U.S. forms of neoliberalism.

Let me turn now to the argument that the coincidence of the financial meltdown with the election of Obama and the disaster of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq constituted a key conjunctural moment that paved the way for Trump-Bannonism. The most immediate fallout of the conjuncture of forces in 2008 was the rise of the Tea Party in early 2009. The popular energies that animated the Tea Party embodied both class and race.⁵⁹ The typical Tea Party member was middle income, older, white, and male, although women were at the forefront of activist work – as was the case in the rise of the Christian Right in the 1970s and 1980s (Moreton 2009). Several analysts situate the Tea Party within a much longer history of right wing movements in the US:

As with other right-wing populist movements, the Tea Party movement holds true to the notion of legitimate and illegitimate populations. The debate over healthcare reform, from their standpoint, was a matter of whether resources should be shared with populations that they considered undeserving. The subtext to this debate was about race, age and class, but most immediately, race. The Tea Party has also been at the vanguard of those forces that hold that the federal government has overextended its reach beyond the boundaries set by the so-called Founding Fathers. (Fletcher 2015, 303–304)

This impulse was entwined with and driven by a fraction of capital intent on reconfiguring the state. In her extraordinary book *Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right* (2017), Jane Mayer provides a detailed account of the 'Kochtopus' – the 'many

tentacled political machine' run by the Koch brothers (Charles and David) whose combined wealth 'put at their disposal the single largest fortune in the world'. The Tea Party became a key vehicle for putting the radical libertarian ambitions of the Kochtopus into practice. Billionaire backers

gave the nascent Tea Party movement organization and political direction, without which it might have frittered away like the Occupy movement. The protesters in turn gave the billionaire donors something they'd had trouble buying—the numbers needed to lend their agenda the air of legitimacy. (Mayer 2017)

Lack of a political base had severely limited the effectiveness of this libertarian segment of the extreme right, whose efforts until then to promote the idea of a Tea Party had failed to gain traction. The Kochtopus, together with Fox News, defined the terrain on which the Tea Party operated, and together pushed the Republican Party sharply to the right with a string of victories in the 2010 mid-term elections.⁶⁰ Yet the right-wing populist politics of the Tea Party during the Obama years was riven with tensions between libertarians and the Christian Right.⁶¹ Following Obama's re-election in 2012, the Tea Party was in the process of being eclipsed by the mainstream Republican Party's turn to immigration reform, with a bipartisan bill that would have provided a path to citizenship for 11 million undocumented immigrants, and enlarged guest worker programmes in low-skilled jobs.⁶² Although bill was defeated, these immigration proposals, Lawrence Rosenthal (2016) argues, generated an irreconcilable gap between the Tea Party and the Republican establishment, paving the way for Donald Trump to stake 'his claim to the Tea Party mother lode' – and 'split the populists in the Tea Party from their free-market conservative partners and realign[ed] them with a [segment of the] white working class, which had been indifferent to the Tea Party during its Obama-era run'.

This argument seems powerfully compelling, but in need of further elaboration in terms of Stephen Bannon's crucial intellectual and organizational role in enabling Trump to mobilize popular antagonisms and constitute a cross-class coalition of white voters – albeit with razor-thin margins in a few swing states – grounded in the much longer history of the Christian Right.

As I will demonstrate more fully in my forthcoming book, there is evidence that at least since 2010 Bannon was working to reconfigure the Tea Party from within, articulating new antagonisms and new lines of demarcation between 'the people' and the 'power bloc' – and effectively working to steal it from the Kochtopus.⁶³ At the core of his Tea Party speeches is a searing critique of the toxic combination of financial and political elites that 'has led the country to the brink of ruin'; instead of the standard refrain of 'makers' and 'takers', he insists that in the U.S. there is socialism for the very poor and the very wealthy, but brutal capitalism for hard-working, salt of the earth middle Americans.

Bannon was also a major force fomenting popular opposition to bipartisan moves toward immigration reform in 2013 that helped to split the Tea Party from the Kochs. In a 2017 interview, Bannon describes a dinner in January 2013 with then Senator Jeff Sessions – who later that year led the victorious opposition to the immigration bill in congress – in which he (Bannon) claims to have forged the novel strategy of linking anti-immigration sentiment that he helped to foment with opposition to free trade – and economic nationalism more generally:

[']I said, look, trade is number 100 on the list of issues, nobody ever talks about it and immigration is like two or three, but *if we ran a campaign that really focused on the economic issues in this country and really got people to understand how trade is so important, and immigration are inextricably linked, about the suppression of wages for the working class and really pulling down the middle class, you know, we could really set this thing on fire^{'64}*

– and then goes on to describe how Trump subsequently gave traction to these ideas in his campaign by 'deploying a very plain-spoken vernacular'. This linking of anti-immigration with antifree trade simultaneously articulates race and class through tropes of nationalism, essentially by tying together the multiple dangers posed to 'pure' Americans by Mexicans, Muslims, Chinese, and various Others. At the same time, Trump-Bannonism also incorporates racist and misogynist appeals – including Trump's overtly racist moves before he ran for office.⁶⁵ Misogyny is rife in the self-proclaimed non-racist alt-right, including among the gamers whom Bannon also brought on board (Green 2017). Propelling these strategies was Bannon's role as a film-maker, as well as his acquisition of Breitbart News in 2012 with massive funding from the billionaire Mercer family. The influence Breitbart came to exert on the political landscape is astounding, far outstripping Fox News.⁶⁶ Under Bannon's leadership, Green notes, there 'was an amplification of the nativist populism already evident in the site's coverage and an emboldened desire to attack "globalist" Republicans along with Democrats' (2017, 144–145).⁶⁷ In addition, 'Breitbart's fixation on race, crime, immigration, radical Islam, and the excesses of political correctness – as well as the site's dark and inflammatory style – did much to shape Trump's populist inclinations and inform his political vocabulary' (2017, 46).

In short: despite some novel workings through popular culture and social media, these articulations of nativism, racism, and anti-feminism with economic nationalism and isolationism are precisely what Patrick Buchanan was invoking in the 1990s. For all Bannon's claims to novelty, Donald Trump did indeed run in Buchanan's old shoes – although he did so galumphing along a path carved out by a very different conjuncture of forces, and strewn with tensions and contradictions that amplified with Bannon's departure. Drawing on a global conjunctural framework, I have tried to trace the key contours of this path – and, in the process, explain why it was only in 2016 that right-wing populist articulations of nationalism and racism gathered sufficient momentum to propel Trump's ascent to power. This framework lets us see Trump-Bannonism as neither an aberration nor an inevitable consequence of the failures of 'progressive neoliberalism', but as a live though latent possibility that required a particular configuration of forces – both contingent and deep-seated – to burst forth.

In a compelling contribution to a forum in the *Boston Review* entitled 'After Trump' published shortly after the November 2016 election, historian Robin Kelley laid out the political challenges of the current conjuncture in the U.S. in terms that remain powerfully salient. Insisting that racism, class anxieties, and prevailing gender ideologies must be understood as operating together and inseparably, he went on to lay out the political imperatives of the current moment:

[W[e cannot change this country without winning over some portion of white working people, and I am not talking about gaining votes for the Democratic Party. I am talking about opening a path to freeing white people from the prison house of whiteness. True, with whiteness comes privilege, but many of the perceived privileges are inaccessible to most, which then generates resentment. Exposing whiteness for what it is—a foundational myth for the birth and consolidation of capitalism—is fundamental if we are to build a genuine social movement dedicated to dismantling the oppressive regimes of racism, heteropatriarchy, empire, and class exploitation at the root of inequality, precarity, materialism, and violence in many forms. I am not suggesting we ignore their grievances, but that we help white working people understand the source of their discontent—real and imagined.

Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor made similar arguments in her powerful contribution to the 'Anti-Inauguration Event' on 20 January 2017.⁶⁸

In drawing to a close, I would like to reflect – of necessity quite briefly – on how the framework developed in this essay speaks to current political challenges in and beyond the U.S. – and in relation to one another.

(5) Thinking through a Global Conjunctural Frame: Some Political Stakes

Moving beyond the Euro-American focus of much recent literature and debate, this essay has outlined a global frame for understanding the rise of exclusionary nationalisms and right-wing populisms in relation to neoliberal forms of capitalism and hegemony. Constructing this frame has entailed fuzing the spatio-historical method of relational comparison from my earlier work with conjunctural analysis – which is, as Koivisto and Lahtinen (2012, 267) put it, an irreducibly political method that 'can expand the capacity to act politically by helping to examine the conditions of a political intervention in their complexity ... and thus open up possibilities for political action'. Relational comparison contributes to this capacity by explicitly incorporating Gramsci's conception of politics as translation.⁶⁹ Within this comparative and conjunctural global frame, I have suggested an understanding distinctively different from those like Mouffe and Fraser who see the rise of exclusionary nationalisms and right-wing populist politics as reactions to late or 'progressive' forms of neoliberalism in Euro-America. It differs as well from Brown's account of a neoliberal Hayekian monster wantonly ripping apart pre-existing forms and norms of secular liberal democracy in the West. Instead, I have sought to show, in broad outline, how the destructive forces unleashed in the neoliberal era are to be found in the wreckages of CWE projects in South Africa, India, and the U.S. – and I suspect many other parts of the world as well – along with the emergence of new forms of U.S. financial and military imperialism in the 1980s. In drawing to a close, let me summarize some insights enabled by this analysis.

First, in this framing neoliberalism can be understood in part and as part of a *counter-revolution* against a wide array of oppositional 'anti-systemic movements' spawned through the contradictions of CWE projects from the late 1960s/early 1970s. We have seen, for example, how the erosion of CWE projects and the rise of oppositional movements from the left became linked in India and the U.S. with the widespread resurgence of anti-secular fundamentalist religions and exclusionary forms of nationalism in the mid-1970s. These include the rise to prominence of white Christian nationalism as a political force and its capture of the Republican Party in the neoliberal era – along with the explosive growth of right-wing anti-Muslim Hindu nationalism (Hindutva) in India over the 1980s, and its deepening entanglement with neoliberal forms of capitalism during the 1990s. Both forms of religious nationalism have roots stretching back to the mid-1920s, and can be viewed in terms of conjunctural analysis as long-wave, deep-seated movements that resurfaced at moments of crisis in the 1970s, in relation to crises of accumulation as well as shortwave or contingent movements. They resonate as well with the rise of Political Islam, understood as an anti-systemic movement intimately linked with the implosion of secular nationalist Development projects.⁷⁰

Concepts of neoliberalism as counter-revolution have been widespread in non-Western regions of the world for some time, but received relatively little attention in more recent work focused on Euro-America – although with some key exceptions.⁷¹ Primary among these is Jordan Camp's (2016) important conjunctural analysis of what he calls the neoliberal carceral state in the U.S., inspired in part by *Policing the Crisis* (Hall et al. 1978), which has also influenced my own thinking. In this powerful Gramscian analysis, Stuart Hall and his associates showed how the amplifying crisis of the British welfare state from the late 1960s – driven by tension-ridden articulations of race and class, and linked with moral panics around questions of crime – paved the way for Thatcherism in 1979. What Hall (1979) termed 'authoritarian populism' under Thatcher formed part of a neoliberal hegemonic project that took a populist form.⁷² In other words, rather than just a *reaction* to late neoliberalism, authoritarian populist politics were integral to its very formation – even in 'the West' – and intimately linked with the erosion of CWE projects.⁷³

A related set of arguments outlined in this essay (that I will develop more fully in the book) builds on and extends my work in South Africa to identify two distinctive forms of neoliberal hegemony: a liberal, technocratic form that seeks to *neutralize* the popular antagonisms often exacerbated by neoliberal capitalism, and a populist form that seeks to *mobilize* these antagonisms but also keep them under control. On one level Zuma, Modi, and Trump can all be seen as exemplifying the second form, with its inherently authoritarian tendencies. Yet in itself this observation is limited, because what is most interesting and politically salient are the multiple forces and processes that propelled them to power; the articulations of nationalisms with racial, religious, gendered, nativist, and other dimensions of difference through which they operate; and the contradictions they have unleashed. Part of my purpose in locating South Africa, India and the U.S. in the same global conjunctural and comparative frame has been to demonstrate a spatio-historical method for understanding (a) the multiple relations and determinations driving the rise of right-wing nationalisms and populist politics in the neoliberal era; and (b) their interconnections with articulations of difference through which they play into practices and processes in the realms of everyday life, and appeal to popular common sense.

Within the confines of this essay, it has been possible only to hint at the contradictions of the two types of neoliberal hegemony in relation to one another - but I would like to conclude by at least gesturing to the direction in which I envisage taking this set of ideas in future work. Instead of the triumph of the right over progressive (or roll-out) neoliberalism or the death of democracy, my analysis suggests that what has been set in motion over the past three decades in some nation-states is a perpetual war between liberal and populist forms of neoliberal hegemony. Mainstream efforts to reassert liberal forms of neoliberal hegemony in the face of what they see as the joint abominations of right and left populism often serve to amplify the powerful anti-elitist populist sentiments they seek to eliminate – as the nightly horror show on Fox News makes abundantly clear.⁷⁴ Mainstream liberal forces have to contend with popular appeals of articulations of right-wing exclusionary nationalisms and anti-secular commitments in the face of ferocious inequalities and precarious livelihoods. They confront as well the broader limits of liberalism - including its own constitutive exclusions. Two other sets of forces are vital to understanding these warring tendencies. First are the contradictions of secularism in contemporary capitalist society that cry out for deeper understanding.⁷⁵ Also of great significance is Michael Bray's (2015, 2019) compelling analysis of the divisions between intellectual and manual labour, that I see as complementary with my own efforts.⁷⁶ These warring tendencies derive in the first instance from the ravages of neoliberal forms of capitalism, but cannot be read directly off them because, as Gramsci put it, 'The specific question of economic hardship or well-being as a cause of new historical realities is a partial aspect of the question of the relations of force, at the various levels' (1971, 184).

Underscoring arguments outlined in the Introduction to this Special Issue, this analysis points, inter alia, to how calls for the electoral defeat of the right through a politics of left populism or progressive populism, are dangerously simplistic. They underestimate the sources, challenges, and complexities of the present moment – as well as the possible openings from which different dynamics and alliances might emerge. From a Gramscian perspective, the challenges confronting the left concern the organizational practices and processes through which more critical, coherent, and collective understandings and actions can emerge in the arenas of everyday life.⁷⁷ I envisage the global conjunctural framework as a potential contribution to this sort of political project – in the hope that it can be put to work not just as an academic research method, but also what other contributions to the Vega symposium call a vernacular analytical practice in the context of political organizing. The purpose is not just to provide a better explanation of the processes that have generated intensified racist and xenophobic forms of nationalism and populist politics, but to enable a deeper dialectical understanding both of the slippages, openings and contradictions they are generating in practice in different regions of the world – and of emerging challenges, opportunities, and possibilities for alliances and creative political action.

Notes

- 1. The quotation is from the 'Leaders' section of *The Economist* November 19, 2016, 9. See also https://www.economist.com/leaders/2016/11/19/the-new-nationalism.
- 2. See https://time.com/4486502/hillary-clinton-basket-of-deplorables-transcript/.
- See for example https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/economic-and-cultural-explanations-of-rightwing-populism-by-dani-rodrik-2019-07.
- I will provide a far more comprehensive overview of key themes in this literature and their conceptual underpinnings in my forthcoming book.
- 5. See Ekers, Kipfer, and Loftus (2020) and Hart (2019) for critiques of Fraser and Mouffe respectively.
- 6. Important contributions include Kelley (2016), Taylor (2017), and a highly illuminating 2015 essay by Bill Fletcher Jr that both anticipated Trumpism, and transcended the ferocious 'race versus class' debate that erupted in the wake of his election.
- 7. Intimately linked with analysis of what he called relations of force at different levels, Gramsci's method of conjunctural analysis is inherently spatial, historical, and comparative, 'acutely aware of the supranational

dimensions of the problems that he addressed' (Liguori 2016, 51). At its core is the distinction between organic movements (relatively permanent) from movements which may be termed 'conjunctural' (and which appear as occasional, immediate, almost accidental)' (1971, 177): 'A common error in historico-political analysis consists in an inability to find the correct relation between what is organic and what is conjunctural. This leads to presenting causes as immediately operative which in fact only operate indirectly, or to asserting that the immediate causes are the only effective ones. In the first case there is an excess of "economism" or doctrinaire pedantry; in the second, an excess of "ideologism". In the first case there is an overestimate of mechanical causes, in the second an exaggeration of the voluntarist and individual element' (1971, 178). The political power of conjunctural analysis lies in providing a fuller understanding of what Gramsci (1971, 178) termed 'the terrain of the "conjunctural" ... [upon which] the forces of opposition organise.'

- It is useful here to bear in mind Stuart Hall's insistence that a conjuncture is not a slice of time or a period, but a moment that 'can only be defined by the accumulation/condensation of contradictions, the fusion or merger – to use Lenin's terms – of 'different currents and circumstances'' (1980a, 165).
- 9. As I will discuss more fully in the book, this framework does *not* simply map on to global/national/local scales understood as hierarchically demarcated or 'nested'. It has far greater affinity with Henri Lefebvre's dialectical framework in the *The Urban Revolution* ([1970] 2003) that distinguishes the global level (defined as the state and capital); the level of everyday life; and the urban level that mediates between the global level and everyday life; and elaborations of this framework by Goonewardena (2005, 2011) and Kipfer (2009) who makes clear that Lefebvrean levels are not conceived as scales, but can be scaled in multiple ways. Instead of 'the urban' I focus on hegemonic processes as the mediating level (or domain). My understanding of hegemony in relation to every-day life draws on Kipfer's (2002) careful parsing of the affinities, distinctions, and complementarities between Gramsci's and Henri Lefebvre's conceptions of hegemony, as well as our joint effort to translate Gramsci's insights in the current conjuncture with the help of Lefebvre, Frantz Fanon, and Himani Bannerji (Kipfer and Hart 2013), all of whom work with an open, non-teleological conception of dialectics. The concept of global conjunctures with which I am working differs from Lefebvre's (2003) concept of 'the global' although it resonates with his development of concepts of 'colonization' and the 'world-wide' (or *mondialité*) in his later work, and the critical appreciation of these concepts by Kipfer and Goonewardena (2013).
- The dialectical concept of articulation with which I am working is indebted to Stuart Hall's (1980b) in the race versus class debate in South Africa at the time, stretched to include Gramsci's analysis of language and translation (Hart 2007, 2013).
- 11. In Hart (2009) I outline a conjunctural analysis that distinguishes 'little d' development as the development of capitalism, and 'big D' Development as a post-second world war project of intervention in the 'Third World'.
- 12. As discussed more fully elsewhere (Hart 2014, 2019), this distinction builds on and extends Laclau's (1977) analysis of Peronism.
- Another key dimension of neoliberal forms of hegemony developed by Michael Bray (2015, 2019) that I will
 engage in my book is grounded in the distinction between intellectual and manual labour; see also Hart (2019).
- 14. The book will also focus far more fully than is possible within the confines of this essay on ethnographic understandings of everyday life that clarify, in specific conditions, how articulations of race, gender, sexuality, caste, and religion operate as active constitutive forces in relation to one another, and to class processes and nationalisms.
- 15. Arrighi draws a sharp distinction between world supremacy and world hegemony, the latter defined as the capacity to create a new world order from systemic chaos (1994, 52–53).
- Following the defeat of French troops in Saint-Domingue (Haiti), the French offered the United States 'for a mere \$15million 828,000 square miles, 530 million acres, at three cents per acre. This vast expanse doubled the nation's size', and still accounts for almost a quarter of the surface area of the U.S. (Baptist 2014, 47).
- 17. For a version with English subtitles, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vtKKJSfYraU.
- 18. Along with many other depictions of the war, De la Rey makes no mention of large numbers of Africans involved in the war as combatants and internees in British concentration camps. For a useful outline of South African settler colonialism and Afrikaner nationalism, see https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/settler-colonialism-and-afrikaner-nationalism.
- 19. Gandhi's sojourn as a lawyer in what became South Africa was the consequence of Indian indentured labour in colonial Natal from the 1860s, followed by the arrival of a substantial merchant class. For an illuminating analysis of these interconnections, see Datta (2011) and other contributions in Hofmeyr and Williams (2011).
- 20. See also Goswami (2004).
- 21. See endnote 11 above.
- 22. Geoff Mann (2017) has convincingly argued that Keynesianism was less a project to save capitalism from communism than to protect modern bourgeois civilization from the disorder and the chaos to which the liberal doctrine of separation of economic and political forces inevitably leads.
- 23. Singh goes on to note that these material inequalities combined with 'historically entrenched opposition to even the most moderate civil rights reforms throughout the white South and much of the urban North across the entire post-World War II period' (Singh 2004, 8).

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- 24. This essay exemplifies what I am calling a conjunctural comparative method by illuminating the multiple forces that came together simultaneously at global, national, and sub-national levels in the late 1960s in different world regions to disrupt the post-second world war status quo. His emphasis on the interconnected historical geographies of '1968' augments in important ways the formulation of anti-systemic movements by Arrighi, Hopkins, and Wallerstein (1989).
- 25. See also Slobodian (2018) and Getachew (2019) for different but complementary perspectives on the defeat of the NIEO.
- 26. See Mamdani (2002, 2004) for a comprehensive discussion of Proxy Wars. He notes that 'CIA chief William Casey took the lead in orchestrating support for terrorist and proto-terrorist movements across the world from the Contras in Nicaragua to the Mujahideen in Afghanistan, to Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) in Mozambique and National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) in Angola through third and fourth parties. Simply put, after the defeat in Vietnam and the Watergate scandal, the United States decided to harness, and even to cultivate terrorism in the struggle against regimes it considered pro-Soviet' (Mamdani 2002, 769).
- 27. In the book I will elaborate much more fully on these arguments, situating them in relation to key themes in the large literature on U.S. imperialism including the debate between Harvey (2003) and Arrighi (2007); Grand-in's (2010) analysis of Latin America as the laboratory of U.S. counterinsurgency, and the 1980s as the crucial moment in the formation of a new conservative coalition in the U.S. that was central to the emergence of a new form of imperialism; Singh's (2017) demonstration of the interconnections of inner and outer wars in *Race and America's Long War*; and the conjunctural analysis of the centrality of racism to U.S. imperialism by Camp and Greenburg (2020).
- 28. See Hung (2016).
- 29. Nitzan and Bichler (2002, 201–202) point to 'the growing convergence of interests between the world's leading petroleum and armament corporations' in the 1970s; and how the 'politicisation of oil, together with the parallel *commercialisation* of arms exports helped shape an uneasy *Weapondollar-Petrodollar Coalition* between these companies, making their differential profitability increasingly dependent on Middle East energy conflicts'.
- 30. More generally, as Corbridge and Harriss (2000, 92) put it, 'By the time of Nehru's death ... the contradictions that were inherent in the political system which he had contributed to creating, and in the whole attempt at bringing about social transformation by bureaucratic means, in the context of a parliamentary democracy established in a state in which there had been no bourgeois revolution, had already become apparent'.
- 31. Since the late 1980s, however, 'Maoists have succeeded ... in spite of both state repression and resistance against them carried on by the militias of dominant groups, in building the 'red corridor' stretching from the upper Gangetic plain bordering Nepal ... down as far as northern Tamil Nadu. The corridor is twice the geographical size of the other two insurgency-affected areas of India, in the North East and Kashmir. The Maoists are now believed to operate in over a third of India's districts' (Harriss 2010, 10–11).
- 32. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) was founded in 1925 'on the uncannily Gramscian principle that enduring political power can arise only on the basis of a prior cultural transformation and consent, and that this broad-based cultural consent to the extreme right's doctrines can only be built through a long historical process, from the bottom up' (Ahmad 2015, 172). For a useful discussion of the interlocking organizations through which Hindutva operates, see Vanaik (2017, 41–50).
- 33. They describe the Janata Party as the product 'of a merger of a large number of disparate parties, from socialists to the Hindu Nationalist Jana Sangh ... united on the single issue of defeating the Emergency regime of the Congress' (2007, 6).
- 34. Corbridge and Harriss (2000, 91), citing a prescient 1977 paper in Bengali by Partha Chatterjee subsequently published in English in 1997. Corbridge and Harriss also cite Gail Omvedt's observation that 'the decade of the 1970s can be seen as one in which most activists of the Marxist left threw themselves into an effort to organise agricultural labour and poor peasant struggles and while these struggles and their organisations stagnated or even fizzled out a very differently focussed 'agrarian revolution' was gathering strength ... based on issues of market-dependent, bureaucratically oppressed peasantry'.
- 35. Black workers staged 70 strikes in 1972; 370 in 1973; 384 in 1974; 275 in 1975; 245 in 1976; the number fell to 90 in 1977 following severe repression (cited in Marais 1998, 78).
- 36. There is broad consensus that the resurgence of popular resistance in the 1970s following the relative political quiescence and intensifying repression of the 1960s was propelled by four key developments: rising unemployment and inflation that eroded the abysmally low wages of black workers; the liberation of Mozambique and Angola following the fall of the Portuguese dictatorship in 1974; the inspiration that the BCM drew from African radicals and black nationalist movements in the U.S.; and 'a growing tendency within the broad opposition to attribute all forms of deprivation, oppression and discrimination (in short, the multiple travails and contradictions experienced in lived reality) to the apartheid system, thereby enabling a heightened and more wide-spread politicization of the oppressed' (Marais 1998, 39).
- 37. Two years earlier, the leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party, L.K. Advani, had ridden 'a 'chariot' (actually a rigged-up Toyota flatbed truck) across India in a Hindu supremacist campaign against the mosque in Ayodhya'

that reaped immediate electoral dividends; in his vivid account, Pankaj Mishra (2014) notes as well 'in old photos, Modi appears atop the chariot as Advani's hawk-eyed understudy'.

- 38. In the first half of the 1980s FOSATU also came under ferocious attack from the vanguardist South African Communist Party claiming to be 'armed with a scientific theory of Marxism-Leninism [that] has the task of infusing political and class consciousness into the trade union movement' (cited by Nash 1999, 74). Nash notes that 'FOSATU had no alternative but to take account of the existing currents of political thought among African workers ... [but] seldom went further than examining the limits of African nationalism' (1999, 70), severely limiting its effectiveness.
- 39. See https://www.sahistory.org.za/topic/congress-south-african-trade-unions-cosatu.
- 40. See https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/mass-democratic-movement-february-1988-january-1990 for a summary of subsequent struggles under the auspices of the Mass Democratic Movement led by church and union figures.
- 41. For a comparative summary, see Freund (2014, 10–14).
- 42. I develop this argument in relation to South Africa in Hart (2014) Chapter 4. Ben Fine (2019, 86) has recently made the important point that political pressure on South Africa conglomerates in the 1980s produced an increase in the sophistication and concentration of ownership in the domestic economy through and including the financial sector, and that these processes 'enabled a relatively smooth transition to neoliberal conditions in the post-apartheid period.' For a fuller discussion of liberalization in India, see Bardhan (2013), Corbridge, Harriss, and Jeffrey (2013), and Vanaik (2017).
- 43. See Freund (2014, 15–17) for a comparative summary.
- 44. Elsewhere (Hart 2014) I have argued that because official articulations of nationalism tap into popular understandings of freedom, justice, and liberation from racial oppression, they are crucial to the ANC's hegemonic project. At the same time, because nationalist calls are linked to redress for the wrongs of the past and visions of a new nation, they are vulnerable to counter-claims of betrayal. Accordingly, the capacity of the ANC to tap into deep veins of popular understandings of the national question is both the linchpin of its hegemonic power and, at the same time, a source of growing instability that is both exacerbated by and contributes to the crisis of capitalist accumulation stagnant growth and escalating unemployment in the face of massive inequality.
- 45. An article entitled 'Pitchfork Politics' in *The Economist* (December 30, 2015) made the same point more prosaically: 'Before Donald Trump, there was Patrick Buchanan. More than two decades before Mr Trump kicked over the Republican tea table, Mr Buchanan, a former speechwriter and White House aide to Presidents Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan launched his own revolt against Republican grandees. He made bids for the Republican presidential nomination in 1992 and 1996, the first of which challenged a sitting president, George H.W. Bush. Like his billionaire successor, Mr Buchanan ran against free trade and called for restrictions on immigration. As early as 1991 he called for a fence on the border with Mexico (talk of a 'great, great' wall would have to wait for Mr Trump)'.
- 46. See Kaplan (2004); Chari (2006) suggests interesting parallels with India.
- 47. This account of the virtuous decade of the 'short civil rights era' goes hand in hand with an image of Martin Luther King as a redemptive icon of racial justice and national unity, occluding his radical critique in the years before his assassination in 1968 of both the Vietnam War and profound race-class oppressions.
- 48. See Gilmore (2007) and Camp (2016) for illuminating analyses.
- 49. The Christian Right then turned attention to Congress, also with disappointing outcomes. 'Ultimately the Christian Right witnessed a mixed bag of Congressional successes and failures during Reagan's first term. The multi-tentacled Family Protection Act never made it out of committees, nor did proposed measure to restore organized school prayer and outlaw abortion. Pressure from the Christian Right did, however, result in Congress' maintenance of the ban on federal funding for poor women's abortions. The period after Reagan's reelection saw a noticeable decline in Congressional interest in the social issues. By 1986, when the Democrats regained control of the Senate, the Christian Right's prospects in Congress dimmed further' (Diamond 1995, 236).
- 50. Melinda Cooper (2017) emphasizes the role of the neoconservative faction in this process.
- 51. In *Roads to Dominion*, Diamond provides a detailed account of the active and enthusiastic participation of the Christian Right in promoting and supporting the terrorist and proto-terrorist movements through which Proxy Wars were fought in each of these regions. She also notes that it was only on sanctions against South Africa that the Reagan administration 'was ultimately forced to act against the New Right's preferences' (1995, 223). This happened on 2 October 1986, when the Senate followed the House in overriding Reagan's veto of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, under pressure from intense grassroots organizing by anti-apartheid movement. The moral abhorrence of Apartheid provided some protection to anti-apartheid activists; those in the Central America solidarity movement were far more vulnerable.
- 52. See https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4528359/george-bush-defines-new-world-order.
- 53. 'The neocon-paleocon feud had smoldered since the mid-1980s, but it intensified in 1990 when President Bush massed troops in Saudi Arabia to fight a war with Iraq. Paleocons, as isolationists, generally opposed the action and warned of pro-Israeli 'dual-loyalists' exerting too much influence over U.S. foreign policy.

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Neoconservatives who were overwhelmingly interventionist and strongly pro-Zionist, supported the war and denounced many of their former partners' (Berlet and Lyons 2000, 244).

- 54. The Patriot movement 'involved some 5 million persons who suspected to varying degrees that the government was manipulated by secret elites and planned the imminent imposition of some form of tyranny ... During the mid-1990s, armed militias [formed by the Patriot movement] were sporadically active in all fifty states, with total membership estimated between 20,000 and 60,000' (Berlet and Lyons 2000, 289).
- 55. 'Buchanan's electoral campaigns, and paleoconservatism's revival, resonated among ultraconservatives and in mainstream political discourse. Examples included a strong anti-immigrant movement, a burgeoning southern heritage subculture glorifying the Confederacy, and a revival of pseudoscientific claims of Whites' genetic racial superiority. To a much greater extent than the New Right politics of the 1970s and 1980s, such initiatives brought mainstream right-wingers and avowed Klan and neonazi far rightists together.' (Berlet and Lyons 282).
- For a longer history of the term, see https://www.vox.com/2018/10/22/17940964/america-first-trump-sarahchurchwell-american-dream.
- 57. 'From the 1970s through to the early 1980s, the American state waged a vigorous battle to revive the industrial economy, partly through a mercantilist turn in external trade policy, but above all through a domestic confrontation with labour to reduce its share of national income ... Yet the hoped-for broad-based industrial revival did not take place. By the mid-1980s, non-financial corporate America was falling under the sway of short-term financial engineering tactics, geared towards the goad of enhancing immediate 'shareholder value'. What followed was wave after wave of mergers and acquisitions and buy-outs by financial operators, encouraged by Wall Street investment banks who profited handsomely from such operations' (Gowan 2009, 24).
- 58. See Krippner (2011) for a fuller discussion of these processes.
- 59. Rosenthal (2016) points out that 'the election of a Democratic president an African American democratic president turned the panic deriving from the financial and housing crisis into a political movement. The long-standing resentment of Democratic 'cultural elitism' the sense on the populist right the liberals 'think they know better and want to tell us how to live our lives' combined with the fear of economic dispossession taking away what 'we' have and giving it to 'them,' the Other, the takers to produce a motivation powerful enough to mobilize millions under the Tea Party banner'.
- 60. Mayer describes as well how FreedomWorks, a tax-exempt organization partly funded by the Kochs, 'quietly cemented a deal with Glenn Beck, the incendiary right-wing Fox News television host who at the time was a Tea Party superstar. For an annual payment that eventually topped \$1 million, Beck read 'embedded content' written by the FreedomWorks staff. They told him what to say on the air, and he blended the promotional material seamlessly into his monologue, making it sound as if it were his own opinion' (Mayer 2017).
- 61. Many Tea Party members could align with their billionaire backers in opposing Obama's health care reforms, but many strongly supported Social Security and Medicare for themselves as deserving recipients, while the Koch machine within and beyond Congress was intent on privatizing these and other government programmes. See Cohen (2012) and Montgomery (2012) for analyses of tensions between the Christian Right and libertarians in the Tea Party.
- 62. As Senator Lindsey Graham put it, 'We're in a demographic death spiral as a party. And the only way we can get back in good graces with the Hispanic community, in my view, is to pass comprehensive immigration reform. If you don't do that it really doesn't matter who you run [in 2016]' (cited by Rosenthal 2016). In early 2013, with strong backing from Fox News, Florida Senator Marco Rubio (elected with Tea Party support) spearheaded the bill.
- 63. In *Devil's Bargain: Steve Bannon, Donald Trump and the Storming of the Presidency* (2017), Joshua Green provides an illuminating account of the synergistic relationship between Bannon and Trump, showing how 'Together, their power and reach gave them strength and influence far beyond what either could have achieved on his own (2017, 22). Green has surprisingly little to say, however, about Bannon's early and apparently vigorous involvement with the Tea Party.
- 64. https://charlierose.com/videos/30951; emphasis added.
- 65. They include the Central Park Five accusations; birtherism; and his exclusion of African-American participants in the latter years of *The Apprentice* (Green 2017).
- 66. See for example the study led by Yochai Benckler on news sharing through social media, showing how Breitbart came to dominate what they call the right-wing media ecosystem: https://www.cjr.org/analysis/breitbart-media-trump-harvard-study.php.
- 67. In his interview with Charlie Rose in September 2017, Bannon comments about Breitbart: 'You know, we have very set beliefs at our media operation. You know, we're populists, we're economic nationalists, we don't -- we believe in America first, we don't believe in a lot of foreign intervention that's not in the vital National Security interests of the United States' https://charlierose.com/videos/30951.
- 68. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJ98sCNVhqY and Taylor (2017). See also Fletcher (2015).
- 69. Stefan Kipfer and I suggest how relational comparison connects with Gramsci's spatio-historical conception of politics as translation but that this requires focusing on articulations of class with race, gender, sexuality, caste and religion, as well as with various forms of nationalism.

- 70. See Lubeck (2000) and Watts (2003) for fuller expositions of this argument.
- 71. In addition to Camp (2016), see Cooper (2017).
- 72. '[This populism] is no rhetorical device or trick, for [it] is operating on genuine contradictions ... Its success and effectivity does not lie in its capacity to dupe unsuspecting folk but in the way it addresses real problems, real and lived experiences, real contradictions and yet is able to represent them within a logic of discourse which pulls them systematically into line with policies and class strategies of the Right ... Currently they [the Right] are gaining ground in defining the 'conjunctural'. That is exactly the terrain on which the forces of opposition must organize, if we are to transform it' (Hall 1979, 20).
- 73. As I discuss more fully elsewhere (Hart 2019), authoritarian populism is now widely invoked to characterize the present moment, but more often than not it operates as a catch-all description or an ideal type, rather than part of a conjunctural analysis focused on processes of neoliberal hegemony and forces operating in the arenas of everyday life.
- 74. This is consistent with Kipfer's (2016, 312) point that 'dominant critiques of populism attest to the ongoing fear of the 'dangerous' classes and 'races'. In turn, this fear fuels the very populist anti-elitism it opposes'.
- 75. Of direct salience here is Saba Mahmood's work in the Middle East showing how 'secular governance has played a crucial role in exacerbating religious tension in the region, hardening interfaith boundaries and polarizing religious differences' (2017, 197).
- 76. See Hart (2019) for a partial discussion that I will develop more fully in forthcoming work.
- 77. In an important set of interventions that explicitly move beyond left populism to engage strategic and organizational challenges facing the left in the current conjuncture, Panagiotis Sotiris calls for 'political organizations that are at the same time laboratories for the collective elaboration of new projects and new mass forms of critical political intellectuality, and experimental sites for new social and political relations ... [as part of] a political process that is deeply democratic and open and necessarily contradictory' (Sotiris 2015, 38). See also Sotiris (2017) and (2019a, 2019b).

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