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PEASM Winter '04 - Bohmer, Hahn & Vavrus

Book Response
Friedman – *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. Part 1

Globalization and hegemony

xix “Today's Era [of globalization] is dominated by American power, American culture, the American dollar and the American navy.”

This seems to suggest that eras of globalization are tied to the powers of hegemony. Statements made later in the book (Ch 6,7, etc ...) seem to imply there's specifically impersonal force of command and control which is something that's not so very new; not the Invisible Hand of the market, but the Electronic Herd and the Golden Straitjacket. This command and control mechanism is a depersonalization of the same kind of force used to keep countries in line during periods of hegemonic control as suggested in McCormick, and there's an explicit link in Friedman between his observation of globalization and hegemonic power. The claim that the command and control of the market forces is impersonal and transnational is contradicted by the explicit connection made to the American hegemony. The workers in the factory may police themselves to some extent as an efficiency, but there's still a foreman for when things get out of control and the National Guard if there's an explosion. Countries may feel the pressure of the market, and they may be reined in by that pressure, however, if that doesn't work there's always the IMF or in extreme cases there could be a sustained 12 year war waged to impose compliance and obedience.

Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc

24 “... there is a deeply ingrained tendency to think in terms of highly segmented, narrow areas of expertise which ignores the fact that the real world is not divided up into such neat little beats and that the boundaries between domestic, international, political and technological affairs are collapsing.” The fallacy apparent here is *post hoc ergo propter hoc* - after this therefore because of this. There is a false conclusion that thinking systemically, being a globalist, is the same as the

market globalization trend. Globalization does not equal globalist thinking, and globalist thinking does not require in some essential way, a particular economic model. The false connection is that the connection existed only after the “walls” fell, and since the era of globalization appeared to occur after that point, therefore it was because of that point. The world was already globally connected, although those connections may have been held by gatekeepers. The connection is not new and the accelerating speed of commerce and communication is not new either. The particular speed is new, but the acceleration is not.

The first step toward community

26 Moving from “need to know” to the “need to share.”

This reminds me of a quote of Henry Louis Gates Jr. of Harvard University:

“Collecting data is only the first step towards wisdom, but sharing data is the first step towards community.”

Works Cited

Friedman, Thomas L. *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. 2000, Anchor
McCormick, Thomas J. *America's Half-Century*. 1995, Johns Hopkins